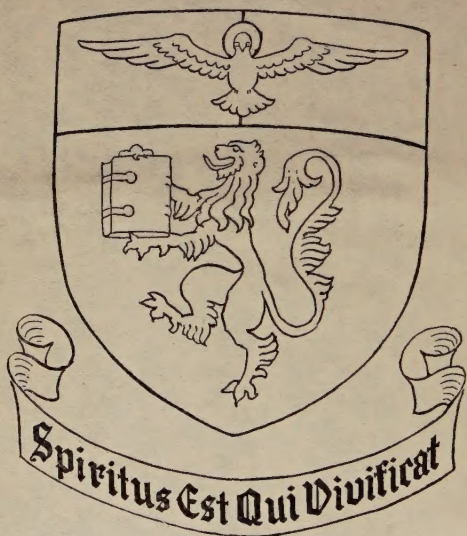


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THE

ALHAMBRA.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.



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DEDICATION.

TO DAVID WILKIE, ESQ., R.A.

MY DEAR SIR: —You may remember that, in the course of the rambles we once took together about some of the old cities of Spain, particularly Toledo and Seville, we frequently remarked the mixture of the Saracenic with the Gothic, remaining from the time of the Moors, and were more than once struck with incidents and scenes in the streets, that brought to mind passages in the “Arabian Nights.” You then urged me to write something illustrative of these peculiarities; “something in the Haroun Alraschid style,” that should have a dash of that Arabian spice which pervades every thing in Spain. I call this to mind to show you that you are, in some degree, responsible for the present work; in which I have given a few “Arabesque” sketches and tales, taken from the life, or founded on local traditions, and mostly struck off during a residence in one of the most legendary and Morisco-Spanish places of the Peninsula.

I inscribe this work to you, as a memorial of the pleasant scenes we have witnessed together, in that land of adventure, and as a testimony of an esteem for your worth, which can only be exceeded by admiration of your talents.

Your friend and fellow traveller

THE AUTHOR.

THE ALHAMBRA.

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THE ALHAMBRA.

A SERIES OF TALES AND SKETCHES OF THE MOORS AND SPANIARDS.

THE JOURNEY.

IN the spring of 1829, the author of this work, whom curiosity had brought into Spain, made a rambling expedition from Seville to Granada, in company with a friend, a member of the Russian embassy at Madrid. Accident had thrown us together from distant regions of the globe, and a similarity of taste led us to wander together among the romantic mountains of Andalusia. Should these pages meet his eye, wherever thrown by the duties of his station, whether mingling in the pageantry of courts or meditating on the truer glories of nature, may they recall the scenes of our adventurous companionship, and with them the remembrance of one, in whom neither time nor distance will obliterate the recollection of his gentleness and worth.

And here, before setting forth, let me indulge in a few previous remarks on Spanish scenery and Spanish travelling. Many are apt to picture Spain in their imaginations as a soft southern region decked out with all the luxuriant charms of voluptuous Italy. On the contrary, though there are exceptions in some of the maritime provinces, yet, for the greater part, it is a stern, melancholy country, with rugged mountains and long, naked, sweeping plains, destitute of trees, and invariably silent and lonesome, partaking of the savage and solitary character of Africa. What adds to this silence and loneliness, is the absence of singing birds, a natural consequence of the want of groves and hedges. The vulture and the eagle are seen wheeling about the mountain cliffs and soaring over the plains,

and groups of shy bustards stalk about the heaths, but the myriads of smaller birds, which animate the whole face of other countries, are met with in but few provinces of Spain, and in them chiefly among the orchards and gardens which surround the habitations of man.

In the exterior provinces, the traveller occasionally traverses great tracts cultivated with grain as far as the eye can reach, waving at times with verdure, at other times naked and sunburnt; but he looks round in vain for the hand that has tilled the soil: at length he perceives some village perched on a steep hill, or rugged crag, with mouldering battlements and ruined watch-tower; a strong-hold, in old times, against civil war or Moorish inroad; for the custom among the peasantry of congregating together for mutual protection, is still kept up in most parts of Spain, in consequence of the marauding of roving freebooters.

But though a great part of Spain is deficient in the garniture of groves and forests, and the softer charms of ornamental cultivation, yet its scenery has something of a high and lofty character to compensate the want. It partakes something of the attributes of its people, and I think that I better understand the proud, hardy, frugal and abstemious Spaniard, his manly defiance of hardships, and contempt of effeminate indulgences, since I have seen the country he inhabits.

There is something, too, in the sternly simple features of the Spanish landscape, that impresses on the soul a feeling of sublimity. The immense plains of the Castiles and La Mancha, extending as far as the eye can reach, derive an interest from their very nakedness and immensity, and have something of the solemn grandeur of the ocean. In ranging over these boundless wastes, the eye catches sight, here and there, of a straggling herd of cattle attended by a lonely herdsman, motionless as a statue, with his long slender pike tapering up like a lance into the air; or beholds a long train of mules slowly moving along the waste like a train of camels in the desert, or a single herdsman, armed with blunderbuss and stiletto, and prowling over the plain. Thus, the country, the habits, the very looks of the people, have something of the Arabian character. The general insecurity of the country is evinced in the universal use of weapons. The herdsman in the field, the shepherd in the plain has his musket and his knife. The wealthy villager rarely ventures to the market-town without his trabucho, and, perhaps, a servant on foot with a blunderbuss on

his shoulder; and the most petty journey is undertaken with the preparations of a warlike enterprise.

The dangers of the road produce, also, a mode of travelling, resembling, on a diminutive scale, the caravans of the East. The arrierors or carriers, congregate in troops, and set off in large and well-armed trains on appointed days, while individual travellers swell their number and contribute to their strength. In this primitive way is the commerce of the country carried on. The muleteer is the general medium of traffic, and the legitimate wanderer of the land, traversing the Peninsula from the Pyrenees and the Asturias, to the Alpuxarras, the Serrania de Ronda, and even to the gates of Gibraltar. He lives frugally and hardily; his *alforjas* (or saddle-bags), of coarse cloth, hold his scanty stock of provisions; a leathern bottle hanging at his saddle-bow, contains wine or water for a supply across barren mountains and thirsty plains; a mule cloth spread upon the ground is his bed at night, and his pack-saddle is his pillow. His low but clear-limbed and sinewy form betokens strength; his complexion is dark and sun-burnt; his eye resolute, but quiet in its expression, except when kindled by sudden emotion; his demeanour is frank, manly, and courteous, and he never passes you without a grave salutation—"Dios guarda à usted!"—"Vay usted con Dios caballero!"—"God guard you!"—"God be with you! cavalier!"

As these men have often their whole fortune at stake upon the burden of their mules, they have their weapons at hand, slung to their saddles, and ready to be snatched down for desperate defence. But their united numbers render them secure against petty bands of marauders, and the solitary *bandalero*, armed to the teeth, and mounted on his Andalusian steed, hovers about them, like a pirate about a merchant convoy, without daring to make an assault.

The Spanish muleteer has an inexhaustible stock of songs and ballads, with which to beguile his incessant way-faring. The airs are rude and simple, consisting of but few inflexions. These he chants forth with a loud voice, and long drawling cadence, seated sideways on his mule, who seems to listen with infinite gravity, and to keep time with his paces, to the tune. The couplets thus chanted are often old traditional romances about the Moors; or some legend of a saint; or some love ditty; or, what is still more frequent, some ballad about a bold *contrabandista*, or hardy *bandalero*; for the smuggler and the robber are poetical heroes among the common people of Spain. Often

the song of the muleteer is composed at the instant, and relates to some local scene, or some incident of the journey. This talent of singing and improvising is frequent in Spain, and is said to have been inherited from the Moors. There is something wildly pleasing in listening to these ditties among the rude and lonely scenes they illustrate, accompanied as they are, by the occasional jingle of the mule-bell.

It has a most picturesque effect, also, to meet a train of muleteers in some mountain pass. First you hear the bells of the leading mules, breaking with their simple melody the stillness of the airy height; or, perhaps, the voice of the muleteer admonishing some tardy or wandering animal, or chanting, at the full stretch of his lungs, some traditionary ballad. At length you see the mules slowly winding along the cragged defile, sometimes descending precipitous cliffs, so as to present themselves in full relief against the sky, sometimes toiling up the deep arid chasms below you. As they approach, you descry their gay decorations of worsted tufts, tassels, and saddle-cloths; while, as they pass by, the ever ready trabucho, slung behind their packs and saddles, gives a hint of the insecurity of the road.

The ancient kingdom of Granada, into which we are about to penetrate, is one of the most mountainous regions of Spain. Vast sierras or chains of mountains, destitute of shrub or tree, and mottled with variegated marbles and granites, elevate their sun-burnt summits against a deep blue sky, yet in their rugged bosoms lie engulfed the most verdant and fertile valley, where the desert and the garden strive for mastery, and the very rock, as it were, compelled to yield the fig, the orange, and the citron, and to blossom with the myrtle and the rose.

In the wild passes of these mountains, the sight of walled towns and villages built like eagles' nests among the cliffs, and surrounded by Moorish battlements, or of ruined watch-towers perched on lofty peaks, carry the mind back to the chivalrous days of Christian and Moslem warfare, and to the romantic struggle for the conquest of Granada. In traversing their lofty Sierras, the traveller is often obliged to alight and lead his horse up and down the steep and jagged ascents and descents, resembling the broken steps of a staircase. Sometimes the road winds along dizzy precipices, without parapet to guard him from the gulfs below, and then will plunge down steep and dark and dangerous declivities. Sometimes it struggles through rugged barrancos, or ravines, worn by water torrents; the ob-

scure paths of the Contrabandista, while ever and anon, the ominous cross, the memento of robbery and murder, erected on a mound of stones at some lonely part of the road, admonishes the traveller that he is among the haunts of banditti; perhaps, at that very moment, under the eye of some lurking bandalero. Sometimes, in winding through the narrow valleys, he is startled by a horse bellowing, and beholds above him, on some green fold of the mountain side, a herd of fierce Andalusian bulls, destined for the combat of the arena. There is something awful in the contemplation of these terrific animals, clothed with tremendous strength, and ranging their native pastures, in untamed wildness: strangers almost to the face of man. They know no one but the solitary herdsman who attends upon them, and even he at times dares not venture to approach them. The low bellowings of these bulls, and their menacing aspect as they look down from their rocky height, give additional wildness to the savage scenery around.

I have been betrayed unconsciously into a longer disquisition than I had intended on the several features of Spanish travelling; but there is a romance about all the recollections of the Peninsula that is dear to the imagination.

It was on the first of May that my companion and myself set forth from Seville, on our route to Granada. We had made all due preparations for the nature of our journey, which lay through mountainous regions where the roads are little better than mere mule paths, and too frequently beset by robbers. The most valuable part of our luggage had been forwarded by the arrieros; we retained merely clothing and necessaries for the journey, and money for the expenses of the road, with a sufficient surplus of the latter to satisfy the expectations of robbers, should we be assailed, and to save ourselves from the rough treatment that awaits the too wary and emptyhanded traveller. A couple of stout hired steeds were provided for ourselves, and a third for our scanty luggage, and for the conveyance of a sturdy Biscayan lad of about twenty years of age, who was to guide us through the perplexed mazes of the mountain roads, to take care of our horses, to act occasionally as our valet, and at all times as our guard; for he had a formidable trabucho, or carbine, to defend us from rateros, or solitary footpads, about which weapon he made much vain-glorious boast, though, to the discredit of his generalship, I must say that it generally hung unloaded behind his saddle. He was, however, a faithful, cheery, kind-hearted creature, full

of saws and proverbs as that miracle of squires, the renowned Sancho himself, whose name we bestowed upon him; and, like a true Spaniard, though treated by us with companionable familiarity, he never for a moment in his utmost hilarity overstepped the bounds of respectful decorum.

Thus equipped and attended, we set out on our journey with a genuine disposition to be pleased: with such a disposition, what a country is Spain for a traveller, where the most miserable inn is as full of adventure as an enchanted castle, and every meal is in itself an achievement! Let others repine at the lack of turnpike roads and sumptuous hotels, and all the elaborate comforts of a country cultivated into tameness and common-place, but give me the rude mountain scramble, the roving haphazard way-faring, the frank, hospitable, though half wild manners, that give such a true game flavour to romantic Spain!

Our first evening's entertainment had a relish of the kind. We arrived after sunset at a little town among the hills, after a fatiguing journey over a wide houseless plain, where we had been repeatedly drenched with showers. In the inn were quartered a party of Miguelistas, who were patrolling the country in pursuit of robbers. The appearance of foreigners like ourselves was unusual in this remote town. Mine host with two or three old gossiping comrades in brown cloaks studied our passports in the corner of the posada, while an Alguazil took notes by the dim light of a lamp. The passports were in foreign languages and perplexed them, but our Squire Sancho assisted them in their studies, and magnified our importance with the grandiloquence of a Spaniard. In the mean time the magnificent distribution of a few cigars had won the hearts of all around us. In a little while the whole community seemed put in agitation to make us welcome. The Corregidor himself waited upon us, and a great rush-bottomed armed chair was ostentatiously bolstered into our room by our landlady, for the accommodation of that important personage. The commander of the patrol took supper with us: a surly, talking, laughing, swaggering Andaluz, who had made a campaign in South America, and recounted his exploits in love and war with much pomp of praise and vehemence of gesticulation, and mysterious rolling of the eye. He told us he had a list of all the robbers in the country, and meant to ferret out every mother's son of them; he offered us at the same time some of his soldiers as an escort. "One is enough to protect you,

Signors; the robbers know me, and know my men; the sight of one is enough to spread terror through a whole sierra." We thanked him for his offer, but assured him, in his own strain, that with the protection of our redoubtable Squire Sancho, we were not afraid of all the ladrones of Andalusia.

While we were supping with our Andalusian friend, we heard the notes of a guitar and the click of castanets, and presently, a chorus of voices, singing a popular air. In fact, mine host had gathered together the amateur singers and musicians and the rustic belles of the neighbourhood, and on going forth, the court-yard of the inn presented a scene of true Spanish festivity. We took our seats with mine host and hostess and the commander of the patrol, under the archway of the court. The guitar passed from hand to hand, but a jovial shoemaker was the Orpheus of the place. He was a pleasant looking fellow with huge black whiskers and a roguish eye. His sleeves were rolled up to his elbows; he touched the guitar with masterly skill, and sang little amorous ditties with an expressive leer at the women, with whom he was evidently a favourite. He afterwards danced a fandango with a buxom Andalusian damsel, to the great delight of the spectators. But none of the females present could compare with mine host's pretty daughter Josefa, who had slipped away and made her toilette for the occasion, and had adorned her head with roses; and also distinguished herself in a bolero with a handsome young dragoon. We had ordered our host to let wine and refreshments circulate freely among the company, yet, though there was a motley assemblage of soldiers, muleteers and villagers, no one exceeded the bounds of sober enjoyment. The scene was a study for a painter: the picturesque group of dancers; the troopers in their half military dresses, the peasantry wrapped in their brown cloaks, nor must I omit to mention the old meagre Alguazil in a short black cloak, who took no notice of any thing going on, but sat in a corner diligently writing by the dim light of a huge copper lamp that might have figured in the days of Don Quixote.

I am not writing a regular narrative, and do not pretend to give the varied events of several days' rambling over hill and dale, and moor and mountain. We travelled in true contrabandista style, taking every thing, rough and smooth, as we found it, and mingling with all classes and conditions in a kind of vagabond companionship. It is the true way to travel

in Spain. Knowing the scanty larders of the inns, and the naked tracts of country the traveller has often to traverse, we had taken care, on starting, to have the alforjas, or saddlebags, of our Squire well stocked with cold provisions, and his beta, or leathern bottle, which was of portly dimensions, filled to the neck with choice Valdepenas wine. As this was a munition for our campaign more important than even his trabucho, we exhorted him to have an eye to it, and I will do him the justice to say that his namesake, the trencher-loving Sancho himself, could not excel him as a provident purveyor. Though the alforjas and beta were repeatedly and vigorously assailed throughout the journey, they appeared to have a miraculous property of being never empty; for our vigilant Squire took care to sack every thing that remained from our evening repasts at the inns, to supply our next day's luncheon.

What luxurious noontide repasts have we made on the green sward by the side of a brook or fountain under a shady tree, and then what delicious siestas on our cloaks spread out on the herbage!

We paused one day at noon, for a repast of the kind. It was in a pleasant little green meadow, surrounded by hills covered with olive trees. Our cloaks were spread on the grass under an elm tree, by the side of a babbling rivulet: our horses were tethered where they might crop the herbage, and Sancho produced his alforjas with an air of triumph. They contained the contributions of four days' journeying, but had been signally enriched by the foraging of the previous evening, in a plenteous inn at Antequera. Our Squire drew forth the heterogeneous contents one by one, and they seemed to have no end. First came forth a shoulder of roasted kid, very little the worse for wear, then an entire partridge, then a great morsel of salted codfish wrapped in paper, then the residue of a ham, then the half of a pullet, together with several rolls of bread and a rabble rout of oranges, figs, raisins, and walnuts. His beta also had been recruited with some excellent wine of Malaga. At every fresh apparition from his larder, he could enjoy our ludicrous surprise, throwing himself back on the grass and shouting with laughter.

Nothing pleased this simple-hearted varlet more than to be compared, for his devotion to the trencher, to the renowned squire of Don Quixote. He was well versed in the history of the Don, and, like most of the common people of Spain, he firmly believed it to be a true history.

"All that, however, happened a long time ago, Signor," said he to me, one day, with an inquiring look.

"A very long time," was the reply.

"I dare say, more than a thousand years?"—still looking dubiously.

"I dare say? not less."

The squire was satisfied.

As we were making our repast above described, and diverting ourselves with the simple drollery of our squire, a solitary beggar approached us, who had almost the look of a pilgrim. He was evidently very old, with a gray beard, and supported himself on a staff, yet age had not borne him down; he was tall and erect, and had the wreck of a fine form. He wore a round Andalusian hat, a sheepskin jacket, and leathern breeches, gaiters, and sandals. His dress, though old and patched, was decent, his demeanour manly, and he addressed us with that grave courtesy that is to be remarked in the lowest Spaniard. We were in a favourable mood for such a visitor, and in a freak of capricious charity gave him some silver, a loaf of fine wheaten bread, and a goblet of our choice wine of Malaga. He received them thankfully, but without any grovelling tribute of gratitude. Tasting the wine, he held it up to the light, with a slight beam of surprise in his eye; then quaffing it off at a draught: "It is many years," said he, "since I have tasted such wine. It is a cordial to an old man's heart." Then looking at the beautiful wheaten loaf: "Bendita sea tal pan!" (blessed be such bread!) So saying, he put it in his wallet. We urged him to eat it on the spot. "No, Signors," replied he, "the wine I had to drink, or leave; but the bread I must take home to share with my family."

Our man Sancho sought our eye, and reading permission there, gave the old man some of the ample fragments of our repast; on condition, however, that he should sit down and make a meal. He accordingly took his seat at some little distance from us, and began to eat, slowly, and with a sobriety and decorum that would have become a hidalgo. There was altogether a measured manner and a quiet self-possession about the old man, that made me think he had seen better days; his language, too, though simple, had occasionally something picturesque and almost poetical in the phraseology. I set him down for some broken-down cavalier. I was mistaken, it was nothing but the innate courtesy of a Spaniard, and the poetical turn of thought and language often to be found in the lowest

classes of this clear-witted people. For fifty years, he told us, he had been a shepherd, but now he was out of employ, and destitute. "When I was a young man," said he, "nothing could harm or trouble me. I was always well, always gay; but now I am seventy-nine years of age, and a beggar, and my heart begins to fail me."

Still he was not a regular mendicant, it was not until recently that want had driven him to this degradation, and he gave a touching picture of the struggle between hunger and pride, when abject destitution first came upon him. He was returning from Malaga, without money; he had not tasted food for some time, and was crossing one of the great plains of Spain, where there were but few habitations. When almost dead with hunger, he applied at the door of a *venta*, or country inn. "*Perdona usted per Dios hermano!*" (excuse us, brother, for God's sake!) was the reply;—the usual mode in Spain of refusing a beggar. "I turned away," said he, "with shame greater than my hunger, for my heart was yet too proud. I came to a river with high banks and deep rapid current, and felt tempted to throw myself in; what should such an old worthless wretched man as I live for! But when I was on the brink of the current, I thought on the blessed Virgin, and turned away. I travelled on until I saw a country-seat, at a little distance from the road, and entered the outer gate of the court-yard. The door was shut, but there were two young signoras at a window. I approached, and begged: '*Perdona usted per Dios hermano!*' (excuse us, brother, for God's sake!) and the window closed. I crept out of the court-yard; but hunger overcame me, and my heart gave way. I thought my hour was at hand. So I laid myself down at the gate, commended myself to the holy Virgin, and covered my head to die. In a little while afterwards, the master of the house came home. Seeing me lying at his gate, he uncovered my head, had pity on my gray hairs, took me into his house, and gave me food. So, Signors, you see that we should always put confidence in the protection of the Virgin."

The old man was on his way to his native place Archidona, which was close by the summit of a steep and rugged mountain. He pointed to the ruins of its old Moorish castle. That castle, he said, was inhabited by a Moorish king at the time of the wars of Granada. Queen Isabella invaded it with a great army, but the king looked down from his castle among the clouds, and laughed her to scorn. Upon this, the Virgin

appeared to the queen, and guided her and her army up a mysterious path of the mountain, which had never before been known. When the Moor saw her coming, he was astonished, and springing with his horse from a precipice, was dashed to pieces. The marks of his horse's hoofs, said the old man, are to be seen on the margin of the rock to this day. And see, Signors, yonder is the road by which the queen and her army mounted, you see it like a riband up the mountain side; but the miracle is, that, though it can be seen at a distance, when you come near, it disappears. The ideal road to which he pointed, was evidently a sandy ravine of the mountain, which looked narrow and defined at a distance, but became broad and indistinct on an approach. As the old man's heart warmed with wine and wassail, he went on to tell us a story of the buried treasure left under the earth by the Moorish king. His own house was next to the foundations of the castle. The curate and notary dreamt three times of the treasure, and went to work at the place pointed out in their dreams. His own son-in-law heard the sound of their pick-axes and spades at night. What they found nobody knows; they became suddenly rich, but kept their own secret. Thus the old man had once been next door to fortune, but was doomed never to get under the same roof.

I have remarked that the stories of treasure buried by the Moors, which prevail throughout Spain, are most current among the poorest people. It is thus kind nature consoles with shadows for the lack of substantials. The thirsty man dreams of fountains and roaring streams, the hungry man of ideal banquets, and the poor man of heaps of hidden gold; nothing certainly is more magnificent than the imagination of a beggar.

The last travelling sketch which I shall give is a curious scene at the little city of Loxa. This was a famous belligerent frontier post, in the time of the Moors, and repulsed Ferdinand from its walls. It was the strong-hold of old Ali Atar, the father-in-law of Boabdil, when that fiery veteran sallied forth with his son-in-law, on that disastrous inroad, that ended in the death of the chieftain, and the capture of the monarch. Loxa is wildly situated in a broken mountain pass, on the banks of the Xenil, among rocks and groves, and meadows and gardens. The people seem still to retain the bold fiery spirit of the olden time. Our inn was suited to the place. It was kept by a young, handsome, Andalusian widow, whose

trim busquina of black silk fringed with bugles, set off the play of a graceful form, and round pliant limbs. Her step was firm and elastic, her dark eye was full of fire, and the coquetry of her air and varied ornaments of her person showed that she was accustomed to be admired.

She was well matched by a brother, nearly about her own age; they were perfect models of the Andalusian *majo* and *maja*. He was tall, vigorous, and well formed, with a clear, olive complexion, a dark beaming eye, and curling, chestnut whiskers, that met under his chin. He was gallantly dressed in a short green velvet jacket, fitted to his shape, profusely decorated with silver buttons, with a white handkerchief in each pocket. He had breeches of the same, with rows of buttons from the hips to the knees; a pink silk handkerchief round his neck, gathered through a ring, on the bosom of a neatly plaited shirt; a sash round the waist to match; bottinas or spatterdashes of the finest russet leather, elegantly worked and open at the calves to show his stockings, and russet shoes setting off a well-shaped foot.

As he was standing at the door, a horseman rode up and entered into low and earnest conversation with him. He was dressed in similar style, and almost with equal finery. A man about thirty, square built, with strong Roman features, handsome, though slightly pitted with the small-pox, with a free, bold and somewhat daring air. His powerful black horse was decorated with tassels and fanciful trappings, and a couple of broad-mouthed blunderbusses hung behind the saddle. He had the air of those *contrabandistas* that I have seen in the mountains of Ronda, and, evidently, had a good understanding with the brother of mine hostess; nay, if I mistake not, he was a favourite admirer of the widow. In fact, the whole inn and its inmates had something of a *contrabandista* aspect, and the blunderbuss stood in a corner beside the guitar. The horseman I have mentioned, passed his evening in the *posada*, and sang several bold mountain romances with great spirit.

As we were at supper, two poor Asturians put in in distress, begging food and a night's lodging. They had been waylaid by robbers as they came from a fair among the mountains, robbed of a horse, which carried all their stock in trade, stripped of their money and most of their apparel, beaten for having offered resistance, and left almost naked in the road. My companion, with a prompt generosity, natural to him, ordered them

a supper and a bed, and gave them a supply of money to help them forward towards their home.

As the evening advanced, the *dramatis personæ* thickened. A large man, about sixty years of age, of powerful frame, came strolling in, to gossip with mine hostess. He was dressed in the ordinary Andalusian costume, but had a huge sabre tucked under his arm, wore large moustaches and had something of a lofty swaggering air. Every one seemed to regard him with great deference.

Our man, Sancho, whispered to us that he was Don Ventura Rodriguez, the hero and champion of Loxa, famous for his prowess and the strength of his arm. In the time of the French invasion, he surprised six troopers who were asleep. He first secured their horses, then attacked them with his sabre; killed some, and took the rest prisoners. For this exploit, the king allows him a *peceta*, (the fifth of a *duro*, or dollar,) per day, and has dignified him with the title of Don.

I was amused to notice his swelling language and demeanour. He was evidently a thorough Andalusian, boastful as he was brave. His sabre was always in his hand, or under his arm. He carries it always about with him as a child does a doll, calls it his Santa Teresa, and says, that when he draws it, “*tembla la tierra!*” (the earth trembles!)

I sat until a late hour listening to the varied themes of this motley group, who mingled together with the unreserve of a Spanish *posada*. We had *contrabandista* songs, stories of robbers, guerilla exploits, and Moorish legends. The last one from our handsome landlady, who gave a poetical account of the *infiernos*, or infernal regions of Loxa—dark caverns, in which subterraneous streams and waterfalls make a mysterious sound. The common people say they are money coiners, shut up there from the time of the Moors, and that the Moorish kings kept their treasures in these caverns.

Were it the purport of this work, I could fill its pages with the incidents and scenes of our rambling expedition, but other themes invite me. Journeying in this manner, we at length emerged from the mountains, and entered upon the beautiful Vega of Granada. Here we took our last mid-day's repast under a grove of olive trees, on the borders of a rivulet, with the old Moorish capital in the distance, dominated by the ruddy towers of the Alhambra, while far above it the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada shone like silver. The day was without

a cloud, and the heat of the sun tempered by cool breezes from the mountains; after our repast, we spread our cloaks and took our last siesta, lulled by the humming of bees among the flowers, and the notes of the ring doves from the neighbouring olive trees. When the sultry hours were past, we resumed our journey, and after passing between hedges of aloes and Indian figs, and through a wilderness of gardens, arrived about sunset at the gates of Granada.

GOVERNMENT OF THE ALHAMBRA.

To the traveller imbued with a feeling for the historical and poetical, the Alhambra of Granada is as much an object of veneration as is the Caaba, or sacred house of Mecca, to all true Moslem pilgrims. How many legends and traditions, true and fabulous, how many songs and romances, Spanish and Arabian, of love and war and chivalry, are associated with this romantic pile! The reader may judge, therefore, of our delight, when, shortly after our arrival in Granada, the governor of Alhambra gave us permission to occupy his vacant apartments in the Moorish palace. My companion was soon summoned away by the duties of his station, but I remained for several months spell-bound in the old enchanted pile. The following papers are the result of my reveries and researches, during that delicious thralldom. If they have the power of imparting any of the witching charms of the place to the imagination of the reader, he will not repine at lingering with me for a season in the legendary halls of the Alhambra.

THE Alhambra is an ancient fortress or castellated palace of the Moorish kings of Granada, where they held dominion over this their boasted terrestrial paradise, and made their last stand for empire in Spain. The palace occupies but a portion of the fortress, the walls of which, studded with towers, stretch irregularly round the whole crest of a lofty hill that overlooks the city, and forms a spire of the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountain.

In the time of the Moors, the fortress was capable of containing an army of forty thousand men within its precincts, and served occasionally as a strong-hold of the sovereigns against

their rebellious subjects. After the kingdom had passed into the hands of the Christians, the Alhambra continued a royal demesne, and was occasionally inhabited by the Castilian monarchs. The Emperor Charles V. began a sumptuous palace within its walls, but was deterred from completing it by repeated shocks of earthquakes. The last royal residents were Philip V. and his beautiful Queen Elizabetta, of Parma, early in the eighteenth century.

Great preparations were made for their reception. The palace and gardens were placed in a state of repair; and a new suite of apartments erected, and decorated by artists brought from Italy. The sojourn of the sovereigns was transient; and, after their departure, the palace once more became desolate. Still the place was maintained with some military state. The governor held it immediately from the crown: its jurisdiction extended down into the suburbs of the city, and was independent of the captain general of Granada. A considerable garrison was kept up; the governor had his apartments in the old Moorish palace, and never descended into Granada without some military parade. The fortress, in fact, was a little town of itself, having several streets of houses within its walls, together with a Franciscan convent and a parochial church.

The desertion of the court, however, was a fatal blow to the Alhambra. Its beautiful walls became desolate, and some of them fell to ruin; the gardens were destroyed, and the fountains ceased to play. By degrees the dwellings became filled up with a loose and lawless population; contrabandistas, who availed themselves of its independent jurisdiction, to carry on a wide and daring course of smuggling, and thieves and rogues of all sorts, who made this their place of refuge, from whence they might depredate upon Granada and its vicinity. The strong arm of government at length interposed. The whole community was thoroughly sifted; none were suffered to remain but such as were of honest character and had legitimate right to a residence; the greater part of the houses were demolished, and a mere hamlet left, with the parochial church and the Franciscan convent.

During the recent troubles in Spain, when Granada was in the hands of the French, the Alhambra was garrisoned by their troops, and the palace was occasionally inhabited by the French commander. With that enlightened taste which has ever distinguished the French nation in their conquests, this

monument of Moorish elegance and grandeur was rescued from the absolute ruin and desolation that were overwhelming it. The roofs were repaired, the saloons and galleries protected from the weather, the gardens cultivated, the water-courses restored, the fountains once more made to throw up their sparkling showers: and Spain may thank her invaders for having preserved to her the most beautiful and interesting of her historical monuments.

On the departure of the French, they blew up several towers of the outer wall, and left the fortifications scarcely tenable. Since that time, the military importance of the post is at an end. The garrison is a handful of invalid soldiers, whose principal duty is to guard some of the outer towers, which serve, occasionally, as a prison of state; and the governor, abandoning the lofty hill of the Alhambra, resides in the centre of Granada, for the more convenient despatch of his official duties. I cannot conclude this brief notice of the state of the fortress, without bearing testimony to the honourable exertions of its present commander, Don Francisco de Salis Serna, who is tasking all the limited resources at his command, to put the palace in a state of repair; and by his judicious precautions has for some time arrested its too certain decay. Had his predecessors discharged the duties of their station with equal fidelity, the Alhambra might yet have remained in almost its pristine beauty; were government to second him with means equal to his zeal, this edifice might still be preserved to adorn the land, and to attract the curious and enlightened of every clime, for many generations.

INTERIOR OF THE ALHAMBRA.

THE Alhambra has been so often and so minutely described by travellers, that a mere sketch will probably be sufficient for the reader to refresh his recollection; I will give, therefore, a brief account of our visit to it the morning after our arrival in Granada.

Leaving our posada of La Espada, we traversed the renowned square of the Vivarrambla, once the scene of Moorish jousts and tournaments, now a crowded market place. From thence we proceeded along the Zacatin, the main street of what was

the great Bazaar, in the time of the Moors, where the small shops and narrow alleys still retain their Oriental character. Crossing an open place in front of the palace of the captain-general, we ascended a confined and winding street, the name of which reminded us of the chivalric days of Granada. It is called the *Calle*, or street of the Gomeres: from a Moorish family, famous in chronicle and song. This street led up to a mansion gateway of Grecian architecture, built by Charles V., forming the entrance to the domains of the Alhambra.

At the gate were two or three ragged and superannuated soldiers, dozing on a stone bench, the successors of the Zegris and the Abencerrages; while a tall, meagre varlet, whose rusty brown cloak was, evidently, intended to conceal the ragged state of his nether garments, was lounging in the sunshine, and gossiping with an ancient sentinel, on duty. He joined us as we entered the gate, and offered his services to showed us the fortress.

I have a traveller's dislike to officious ciceroni, and did not altogether like the garb of the applicant:

"You are well acquainted with the place, I presume?"

"Niñuno mas—pues, señor, soy hijo de la Alhambra."

(Nobody better—in fact, sir, I am a son of the Alhambra.)

The common Spaniards have certainly a most poetical way of expressing themselves—"A son of the Alhambra:" the appellation caught me at once; the very tattered garb of my new acquaintance assumed a dignity in my eyes. It was emblematic of the features of the place, and became the progeny of a ruin.

I put some further questions to him, and found his title was legitimate. His family had lived in the fortress from generation to generation ever since the time of the conquest. His name was Mateo Ximenes. "Then, perhaps," said I, "you may be a descendant from the great Cardinal Ximenes."

"Dios sabe! God knows, señor. It may be so. We are the oldest family in the Alhambra. *Viejos Cristianos*, old Christians, without any taint of Moor or Jew. I know we belong to some great family or other, but I forget who. My father knows all about it. He has the coat of arms hanging up in his cottage, up in the fortress."—There is never a Spaniard, however poor, but has some claim to high pedigree. The first title of this ragged worthy, however, had completely captivated me, so I gladly accepted the services of the "son of the Alhambra."

We now found ourselves in a deep narrow ravine, filled with beautiful groves, with a steep avenue and various foot-paths winding through it, bordered with stone seats and ornamented with fountains. To our left, we beheld the towers of the Alhambra beetling above us; to our right, on the opposite side of the ravine, we were equally dominated by rival towers on a rocky eminence. These, we were told, were the Torres Vermijos, or Vermilion towers, so called from their ruddy hue. No one knows their origin. They are of a date much anterior to the Alhambra. Some suppose them to have been built by the Romans; others, by some wandering colony of Phœnicians. Ascending the steep and shady avenue, we arrived at the foot of a huge square Moorish tower, forming a kind of barbican, through which passed the main entrance to the fortress. Within the barbican was another group of veteran invalids, one mounting guard at the portal, while the rest, wrapped in their tattered cloaks, slept on the stone benches. This portal is called the Gate of Justice, from the tribunal held within its porch during the Moslem domination, for the immediate trial of petty causes; a custom common to the Oriental nations, and occasionally alluded to in the sacred Scriptures.

The great vestibule, or porch of the gate, is formed by an immense Arabian arch of the horseshoe form, which springs to half the height of the tower. On the key-stone of this arch is engraven a gigantic hand. Within the vestibule, on the key-stone of the portal, is engraven, in like manner, a gigantic key. Those who pretend to some knowledge of Mahometan symbols, affirm, that the hand is the emblem of doctrine, and the key, of faith; the latter, they add, was emblazoned on the standard of the Moslems when they subdued Andalusia, in opposition to the Christian emblem of the cross. A different explanation, however, was given by the legitimate "son of the Alhambra," and one more in unison with the notions of the common people, who attach something of mystery and magic to everything Moorish, and have all kinds of superstitions connected with this old Moslem fortress.

According to Mateo, it was a tradition handed down from the oldest inhabitants, and which he had from his father and grandfather, that the hand and key were magical devices on which the fate of the Alhambra depended. The Moorish king who built it was a great magician, and, as some believed, had sold himself to the devil, and had laid the whole fortress under a magic spell. By this means it had remained standing for

several hundred years, in defiance of storms and earthquakes, while almost all the other buildings of the Moors had fallen to ruin and disappeared. The spell, the tradition went on to say, would last until the hand on the outer arch should reach down and grasp the key, when the whole pile would tumble to pieces, and all the treasures buried beneath it by the Moors would be revealed.

Notwithstanding this ominous prediction, we ventured to pass through the spell-bound gateway, feeling some little assurance against magic art in the protection of the Virgin, a statue of whom we observed above the portal.

After passing through the Barbican, we ascended a narrow lane, winding between walls, and came on an open esplanade within the fortress, called the Plaza de los Algibes, or Place of the Cisterns, from great reservoirs which undermine it, cut in the living rock by the Moors, for the supply of the fortress. Here, also, is a well of immense depth, furnishing the purest and coldest of water,—another monument of the delicate taste of the Moors, who were indefatigable in their exertions to obtain that element in its crystal purity.

In front of this esplanade is the splendid pile, commenced by Charles V., intended, it is said, to eclipse the residence of the Moslem kings. With all its grandeur and architectural merit, it appeared to us like an arrogant intrusion, and passing by it we entered a simple unostentatious portal, opening into the interior of the Moorish palace.

The transition was almost magical; it seemed as if we were at once transported into other times and another realm, and were treading the scenes of Arabian story. We found ourselves in a great court paved with white marble and decorated at each end with light Moorish peristyles. It is called the court of the Alberca. In the centre was an immense basin, or fish-pool, a hundred and thirty feet in length, by thirty in breadth, stocked with gold-fish, and bordered by hedges of roses. At the upper end of this court, rose the great tower of Comares.

From the lower end, we passed through a Moorish arch-way into the renowned Court of Lions. There is no part of the edifice that gives us a more complete idea of its original beauty and magnificence than this; for none has suffered so little from the ravages of time. In the centre stands the fountain famous in song and story. The alabaster basins still shed their diamond drops, and the twelve lions which support them, cast

forth their crystal streams as in the days of Boabdil. The court is laid out in flower beds, and surrounded by light Arabian arcades of open filigree work, supported by slender pillars of white marble. The architecture, like that of all the other parts of the palace, is characterized by elegance, rather than grandeur, bespeaking a delicate and graceful taste, and a disposition to indolent enjoyment. When we look upon the fairy tracery of the peristyles, and the apparently fragile fretwork of the walls, it is difficult to believe that so much has survived the wear and tear of centuries, the shocks of earthquakes, the violence of war, and the quiet, though no less baneful, pilferings of the tasteful traveller. It is almost sufficient to excuse the popular tradition, that the whole is protected by a magic charm.

On one side of the court, a portal richly adorned opens into a lofty hall paved with white marble, and called the Hall of the two Sisters. A cupola or lantern admits a tempered light from above, and a free circulation of air. The lower part of the walls is incrustated with beautiful Moorish tiles, on some of which are emblazoned the éscutcheons of the Moorish monarchs: the upper part is faced with the fine stucco work invented at Damascus, consisting of large plates cast in moulds and artfully joined, so as to have the appearance of having been laboriously sculptured by the hand into light relievos and fanciful arabesques, intermingled with texts of the Koran, and poetical inscriptions in Arabian and Celtic characters. These decorations of the walls and cupolas are richly gilded, and the interstices panelled with lapis lazuli and other brilliant and enduring colours. On each side of the wall are recesses for ottomans and arches. Above an inner porch, is a balcony which communicated with the women's apartment. The latticed balconies still remain, from whence the dark-eyed beauties of the harem might gaze unseen upon the entertainments of the hall below.

It is impossible to contemplate this once favourite abode of Oriental manners, without feeling the early associations of Arabian romance, and almost expecting to see the white arm of some mysterious princess beckoning from the balcony, or some dark eye sparkling through the lattice. The abode of beauty is here, as if it had been inhabited but yesterday—but where are the Zoraydas and Linderaxas!

On the opposite side of the court of Lions, is the hall of the Abencerrages, so called from the gallant cavaliers of that

illustrious line, who were here perfidiously massacred. There are some who doubt the whole truth of this story, but our humble attendant, Mateo, pointed out the very wicket of the portal through which they are said to have been introduced, one by one, and the white marble fountain in the centre of the hall, where they were beheaded. He showed us also certain broad ruddy stains in the pavement, traces of their blood, which, according to popular belief, can never be effaced. Finding we listened to him with easy faith, he added, that there was often heard at night, in the Court of the Lions, a low confused sound, resembling the murmurings of a multitude; with now and then a faint tinkling, like the distant clank of chains. These noises are probably produced by the bubbling currents and tinkling falls of water, conducted under the pavement through pipes and channels to supply the fountains; but according to the legend of the son of the Alhambra, they are made by the spirits of the murdered Abencerrages, who nightly haunt the scene of their suffering, and invoke the vengeance of Heaven on their destroyer.

From the Court of Lions, we retraced our steps through the court of the Alberca, or great fish-pool, crossing which, we proceeded to the tower of Comares, so called from the name of the Arabian architect. It is of massive strength, and lofty height, domineering over the rest of the edifice, and overhanging the steep hill-side, which descends abruptly to the banks of the Darro. A Moorish archway admitted us into a vast and lofty hall, which occupies the interior of the tower, and was the grand audience chamber of the Moslem monarchs, thence called the hall of Ambassadors. It still bears the traces of past magnificence. The walls are richly stuccoed and decorated with arabesques, the vaulted ceilings of cedar wood, almost lost in obscurity from its height, still gleam with rich gilding and the brilliant tints of the Arabian pencil. On three sides of the saloon are deep windows, cut through the immense thickness of the walls, the balconies of which look down upon the verdant valley of the Darro, the streets and convents of the Albaycin, and command a prospect of the distant Vega. I might go on to describe the other delightful apartments of this side of the palace; the Tocador or toilet of the Queen, an open belvedere on the summit of the tower, where the Moorish sultanas enjoyed the pure breezes from the mountain and the prospect of the surrounding paradise. The secluded little patio or garden of Lindaraxa, with its alabaster

fountain, its thickets of roses and myrtles, of citrons and oranges. The cool halls and grottoes of the baths, where the glare and heat of day are tempered into a self-mysterious light and a pervading freshness. But I appear to dwell minutely on these scenes. My object is merely to give the reader a general introduction into an abode, where, if disposed, he may linger and loiter with me through the remainder of this work, gradually becoming familiar with all its beauties.

An abundant supply of water, brought from the mountains by old Moorish aqueducts, circulates throughout the palace, supplying its baths and fish-pools, sparkling in jets within its halls, or murmuring in channels along the marble pavements. When it has paid its tribute to the royal pile, and visited its gardens and pastures, it flows down the long avenue leading to the city, tinkling in rills, gushing in fountains, and maintaining a perpetual verdure in those groves that embower and beautify the whole hill of the Alhambra.

Those, only, who have sojourned in the ardent climates of the South, can appreciate the delights of an abode combining the breezy coolness of the mountain with the freshness and verdure of the valley.

While the city below pants with the noon-tide heat, and the parched Vega trembles to the eye, the delicate airs from the Sierra Nevada play through the lofty halls, bringing with them the sweetness of the surrounding gardens. Every thing invites to that indolent repose, the bliss of Southern climes; and while the half-shut eye looks out from shaded balconies upon the glittering landscape, the ear is lulled by the rustling of groves, and the murmur of running streams.

THE TOWER OF COMARES.

THE reader has had a sketch of the interior of the Alhambra, and may be desirous of a general idea of its vicinity. The morning is serene and lovely; the sun has not gained sufficient power to destroy the freshness of the night; we will mount to the summit of the tower of Comares, and take a bird's-eye view of Granada and its environs.

Come, then, worthy reader and comrade, follow my steps into this vestibule ornamented with rich tracery, which opens to the hall of Ambassadors. We will not enter the hall, how-

ever, but turn to the left, to this small door, opening in the wall. Have a care! here are steep winding steps and but scanty light. Yet, up this narrow, obscure and winding staircase, the proud monarchs of Granada and their queens have often ascended to the battlements of the tower to watch the approach of Christian armies; or to gaze on the battles in the Vega. At length we are upon the terraced roof, and may take breath for a moment, while we cast a general eye over the splendid panorama of city and country, of rocky mountain, verdant valley and fertile plain; of castle, cathedral, Moorish towers and Gothic domes, crumbling ruins and blooming groves.

Let us approach the battlements and cast our eyes immediately below. See,—on this side we have the whole plan of the Alhambra laid open to us, and can look down into its courts and gardens. At the foot of the tower is the Court of the Alberca with its great tank or fish-pool bordered with flowers; and yonder is the Court of Lions, with its famous fountain, and its light Moorish arcades; and in the centre of the pile is the little garden of Lindaraxa, buried in the heart of the building, with its roses and citrons and shrubbery of emerald green.

That belt of battlements studded with square towers, straggling round the whole brow of the hill, is the outer boundary of the fortress. Some of the towers, you may perceive, are in ruins, and their massive fragments are buried among vines, fig-trees and aloes.

Let us look on this northern side of the tower. It is a giddy height; the very foundations of the tower rise above the groves of the steep hill-side. And see, a long fissure in the massive walls shows that the tower has been rent by some of the earthquakes, which from time to time have thrown Granada into consternation; and which, sooner or later, must reduce this crumbling pile to a mere mass of ruin. The deep narrow glen below us, which gradually widens as it opens from the mountains, is the valley of the Darro; you see the little river winding its way under embowered terraces, and among orchards and flower gardens. It is a stream famous in old times for yielding gold, and its sands are still sifted, occasionally, in search of the precious ore.

Some of those white pavilions which here and there gleam from among groves and vineyards, were rustic retreats of the Moors, to enjoy the refreshment of their gardens.

The airy palace with its tall white towers and long arcades, which breast yon mountain, among pompous groves and hanging gardens, is the Generaliffe, a summer palace of the Moorish kings, to which they resorted during the sultry months, to enjoy a still more breezy region than that of the Alhambra. The naked summit of the height above it, where you behold some shapeless ruins, is the Silla del Moro, or seat of the Moor; so called from having been a retreat of the unfortunate Boabdil, during the time of an insurrection, where he seated himself and looked down mournfully upon his rebellious city.

A murmuring sound of water now and then rises from the valley. It is from the aqueduct of yon Moorish mill nearly at the foot of the hill. The avenue of trees beyond, is the Alameda along the bank of the Darro, a favourite resort in evenings, and a rendezvous of lovers in the summer nights, when the guitar may be heard at a late hour from the benches along its walks. At present there are but a few loitering monks to be seen there, and a group of water carriers from the fountain of Avellanos.

You start! 'Tis nothing but a hawk we have frightened from his nest. This old tower is a complete brooding-place for vagrant birds. The swallow and martlet abound in every chink and cranny, and circle about it the whole day long; while at night, when all other birds have gone to rest, the moping owl comes out of its lurking place, and utters its boding cry from the battlements. See how the hawk we have dislodged sweeps away below us, skimming over the tops of the trees, and sailing up to ruins above the Generaliffe.

Let us leave this side of the tower and turn our eyes to the west. Here you behold in the distance a range of mountains bounding the Vega, the ancient barrier between Moslem Granada and the land of the Christians. Among the heights you may still discern warrior towns, whose gray walls and battlements seem of a piece with the rocks on which they are built; while here and there is a solitary atalaya or watch-tower, mounted on some lofty point, and looking down as if it were from the sky, into the valleys on either side. It was down the defiles of these mountains, by the pass of Lope, that the Christian armies descended into the Vega. It was round the base of yon gray and naked mountain, almost insulated from the rest, and stretching its bald rocky promontory into the bosom of the plain, that the invading squadrons would come bursting into view, with flaunting banners and the clangour of drums

and trumpets. How changed is the scene! Instead of the glittering line of mailed warriors, we behold the patient train of the toilful muleteer, slowly moving along the skirts of the mountain.

Behind that promontory, is the eventful bridge of Pinos, renowned for many a bloody strife between Moors and Christians; but still more renowned as being the place where Columbus was overtaken and called back by the messenger of Queen Isabella, just as he was departing in despair to carry his project of discovery to the court of France.

Behold another place famous in the history of the discoverer: yon line of walls and towers, gleaming in the morning sun in the very centre of the Vega; the city of Santa Fe, built by the Catholic sovereigns during the siege of Granada, after a conflagration had destroyed their camp. It was to these walls that Columbus was called back by the heroic queen, and within them the treaty was concluded that led to the discovery of the Western World.

Here, towards the south, the eye revels on the luxuriant beauties of the Vega; a blooming wilderness of grove and garden, and teeming orchards; with the Xenil winding through it in silver links and feeding innumerable rills, conducted through ancient Moorish channels, which maintain the landscape in perpetual verdure. Here are the beloved bowers and gardens, and rural retreats for which the Moors fought with such desperate valour. The very farm-houses and hovels which are now inhabited by the boors, retain traces of arabesques and other tasteful decorations, which show them to have been elegant residences in the days of the Moslems.

Beyond the embowered region of the Vega you behold, to the south, a line of arid hills down which a long train of mules is slowly moving. It was from the summit of one of those hills that the unfortunate Boabdil cast back his last look upon Granada and gave vent to the agony of his soul. It is the spot famous in song and story, "The last sigh of the Moor."

Now raise your eyes to the snowy summit of yon pile of mountains, shining like a white summer cloud on the blue sky. It is the Sierra Nevada, the pride and delight of Granada; the source of her cooling breezes and perpetual verdure, of her gushing fountains and perennial streams. It is this glorious pile of mountains that gives to Granada that combination of delights so rare in a southern city. The fresh vegetation, and the temperate airs of a northern climate, with the vivifying

ardour of a tropical sun, and the cloudless azure of a southern sky. It is this aerial treasury of snow, which, melting in proportion to the increase of the summer heat, sends down rivulets and streams through every glen and gorge of the Al-puxarras, diffusing emerald verdure and fertility throughout a chain of happy and sequestered valleys.

These mountains may well be called the glory of Granada. They dominate the whole extent of Andalusia, and may be seen from its most distant parts. The muleteer hails them as he views their frosty peaks from the sultry level of the plain; and the Spanish mariner on the deck of his bark, far, far off, on the bosom of the blue Mediterranean, watches them with a pensive eye, thinks of delightful Granada, and chants in low voice some old romance about the Moors.

But enough, the sun is high above the mountains, and is pouring his full fervour upon our heads. Already the terraced roof of the town is hot beneath our feet, let us abandon it, and descend and refresh ourselves under the arcades by the fountain of the Lions.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE MOSLEM DOMINATION IN SPAIN.

ONE of my favourite resorts is the balcony of the central window of the Hall of Ambassadors, in the lofty tower of Comares. I have just been seated there, enjoying the close of a long brilliant day. The sun, as he sank behind the purple mountains of Alhama, sent a stream of effulgence up the valley of the Darro, that spread a melancholy pomp over the ruddy towers of the Alhambra, while the Vega, covered with a slight sultry vapour that caught the setting ray, seemed spread out in the distance like a golden sea. Not a breath of air disturbed the stillness of the hour, and though the faint sound of music and merriment now and then arose from the gardens of the Darro, it but rendered more impressive the monumental silence of the pile which overshadowed me. It was one of those hours and scenes in which memory asserts an almost magical power, and, like the evening sun beaming on these mouldering towers, sends back her retrospective rays to light up the glories of the past.

As I sat watching the effect of the declining daylight upon this Moorish pile, I was led into a consideration of the light, elegant and voluptuous character prevalent throughout its internal architecture, and to contrast it with the grand but gloomy solemnity of the Gothic edifices, reared by the Spanish conquerors. The very architecture thus bespeaks the opposite and irreconcilable natures of the two warlike people, who so long battled here for the mastery of the Peninsula. By degrees I fell into a course of musing upon the singular features of the Arabian or Morisco Spaniards, whose whole existence is as a tale that is told, and certainly forms one of the most anomalous yet splendid episodes in history. Potent and durable as was their dominion, we have no one distinct title by which to designate them. They were a nation, as it were, without a legitimate country or a name. A remote wave of the great Arabian inundation, cast upon the shores of Europe, they seemed to have all the impetus of the first rush of the torrent. Their course of conquest from the rock of Gibraltar to the cliffs of the Pyrenees, was as rapid and brilliant as the Moslem victories of Syria and Egypt. Nay, had they not been checked on the plains of Tours, all France, all Europe, might have been overrun with the same facility as the empires of the east, and the crescent might at this day have glittered on the fanes of Paris and of London.

Repelled within the limits of the Pyrenees, the mixed hordes of Asia and Africa that formed this great irruption, gave up the Moslem principles of conquest, and sought to establish in Spain a peaceful and permanent dominion. As conquerors their heroism was only equalled by their moderation; and in both, for a time, they excelled the nations with whom they contended. Severed from their native homes, they loved the land given them, as they supposed, by Allah, and strove to embellish it with every thing that could administer to the happiness of man. Laying the foundations of their power in a system of wise and equitable laws, diligently cultivating the arts and sciences, and promoting agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, they gradually formed an empire unrivalled for its prosperity, by any of the empires of Christendom; and diligently drawing round them the graces and refinements that marked the Arabian empire in the east at the time of its greatest civilization, they diffused the light of oriental knowledge through the western regions of benighted Europe.

The cities of Arabian Spain became the resort of Christian

artisans, to instruct themselves in the useful arts. The universities of Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada were sought by the pale student from other lands, to acquaint himself with the sciences of the Arabs, and the treasured lore of antiquity; the lovers of the gay sciences resorted to Cordova and Granada, to imbibe the poetry and music of the east; and the steel-clad warriors of the north hastened thither, to accomplish themselves in the graceful exercises and courteous usages of chivalry.

If the Moslem monuments in Spain; if the Mosque of Cordova, the Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada, still bear inscriptions fondly boasting of the power and permanency of their dominion, can the boast be derided as arrogant and vain? Generation after generation, century after century had passed away, and still they maintained possession of the land. A period had elapsed longer than that which has passed since England was subjugated by the Norman conqueror; and the descendants of Musa and Tarik might as little anticipate being driven into exile, across the same straits traversed by their triumphant ancestors, as the descendants of Rollo and William and their victorious peers may dream of being driven back to the shores of Normandy.

With all this, however, the Moslem empire in Spain was but a brilliant exotic that took no permanent root in the soil it embellished. Severed from all their neighbours of the west by impassable barriers of faith and manners, and separated by seas and deserts from their kindred of the east, they were an isolated people. Their whole existence was a prolonged though gallant and chivalric struggle for a foot-hold in a usurped land. They were the outposts and frontiers of Islamism. The peninsula was the great battle ground where the Gothic conquerors of the north and the Moslem conquerors of the east, met and strove for mastery; and the fiery courage of the Arab was at length subdued by the obstinate and persevering valour of the Goth.

Never was the annihilation of a people more complete than that of the Morisco Spaniards. Where are they? Ask the shores of Barbary and its desert places. The exiled remnant of their once powerful empire disappeared among the barbarians of Africa, and ceased to be a nation. They have not even left a distinct name behind them, though for nearly eight centuries they were a distinct people. The home of their adoption and of their occupation for ages refuses to acknow-

ledge them but as invaders and usurpers. A few broken monuments are all that remain to bear witness to their power and dominion, as solitary rocks left far in the interior bear testimony to the extent of some vast inundation. Such is the Alhambra. A Moslem pile in the midst of a Christian land; an oriental palace amidst the Gothic edifices of the west; an elegant memento of a brave, intelligent and graceful people, who conquered, ruled, and passed away.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

It is time that I give some idea of my domestic arrangements in this singular residence. The royal palace of the Alhambra is intrusted to the care of a good old maiden dame called Doña Antonia Molina, but who, according to Spanish custom, goes by the more neighbourly appellation of Tia Antonia (Aunt Antonia). She maintains the Moorish halls and gardens in order, and shows them to strangers; in consideration of which, she is allowed all the perquisites received from visitors and all the produce of the gardens, excepting that she is expected to pay an occasional tribute of fruits and flowers to the governor. Her residence is in a corner of the palace, and her family consists of a nephew and niece, the children of two different brothers. The nephew, Manuel Molina, is a young man of sterling worth and Spanish gravity. He has served in the armies both in Spain and the West Indies, but is now studying medicine in hopes of one day or other becoming physician to the fortress, a post worth at least a hundred and forty dollars a year. As to the niece, she is a plump little black-eyed Andalusian damsel named Dolores, but who from her bright looks and cheerful disposition merits a merrier name. She is the declared heiress of all her aunt's possessions, consisting of certain ruinous tenements in the fortress, yielding a revenue of about one hundred and fifty dollars. I had not been long in the Alhambra before I discovered that a quiet courtship was going on between the discreet Manuel and his bright-eyed cousin, and that nothing was wanting to enable them to join their hands and expectations, but that he should receive his doctor's diploma, and purchase a dispensation from the pope, on account of their consanguinity.

With the good dame Antonia I have made a treaty, according to which, she furnishes me with board and lodging, while the merry-hearted little Dolores keeps my apartment in order and officiates as handmaid at meal times. I have also at my command a tall, stuttering, yellow-haired lad named Pepe, who works in the garden, and would fain have acted as valet, but in this he was forestalled by Mateo Ximenes, "The son of the Alhambra." This alert and officious wight has managed, somehow or other, to stick by me, ever since I first encountered him at the outer gate of the fortress, and to weave himself into all my plans, until he has fairly appointed and installed himself my valet, cicerone, guide, guard, and historio-graphic squire; and I have been obliged to improve the state of his wardrobe, that he may not disgrace his various functions, so that he has cast off his old brown mantle, as a snake does his skin, and now figures about the fortress with a smart Andalusian hat and jacket, to his infinite satisfaction and the great astonishment of his comrades. The chief fault of honest Mateo is an over-anxiety to be useful. Conscious of having foisted himself into my employ, and that my simple and quiet habits render his situation a sinecure, he is at his wit's end to devise modes of making himself important to my welfare. I am in a manner the victim of his officiousness; I cannot put my foot over the threshold of the palace to stroll about the fortress, but he is at my elbow to explain every thing I see, and if I venture to ramble among the surrounding hills, he insists upon attending me as a guard, though I vehemently suspect he would be more apt to trust to the length of his legs than the strength of his arms in case of attack. After all, however, the poor fellow is at times an amusing companion; he is simple-minded and of infinite good humour, with the loquacity and gossip of a village barber, and knows all the small talk of the place and its environs; but what he chiefly values himself on is his stock of local information, having the most marvellous stories to relate of every tower, and vault and gateway of the fortress, in all of which he places the most implicit faith.

Most of these he has derived, according to his own account, from his grandfather, a little legendary tailor, who lived to the age of nearly a hundred years, during which he made but two migrations beyond the precincts of the fortress. His shop, for the greater part of a century, was the resort of a knot of venerable gossips, where they would pass half the night talking about old times and the wonderful events and hidden secrets of the

place. The whole living, moving, thinking and acting of this little historical tailor, had thus been bounded by the walls of the Alhambra; within them he had been born, within them he lived, breathed and had his being, within them he died and was buried. Fortunately for posterity his traditionary lore died not with him. The authentic Mateo, when an urchin, used to be an attentive listener to the narratives of his grandfather and of the gossip group assembled round the shop board, and is thus possessed of a stock of valuable knowledge concerning the Alhambra, not to be found in the books, and well worthy the attention of every curious traveller.

Such are the personages that contribute to my domestic comforts in the Alhambra, and I question whether any of the potentates, Moslem or Christian, who have preceded me in the palace, have been waited upon with greater fidelity or enjoyed a serener sway.

When I rise in the morning, Pepe, the stuttering lad, from the gardens, brings me a tribute of fresh culled flowers, which are afterwards arranged in vases by the skilful hand of Dolores, who takes no small pride in the decorations of my chamber. My meals are made wherever caprice dictates, sometimes in one of the Moorish halls, sometimes under the arcades of the Court of Lions, surrounded by flowers and fountains; and when I walk out I am conducted by the assiduous Mateo to the most romantic retreats of the mountains and delicious haunts of the adjacent valleys, not one of which but is the scene of some wonderful tale.

Though fond of passing the greater part of my day alone, yet I occasionally repair in the evenings to the little domestic circle of Doña Antonia. This is generally held in an old Moorish chamber, that serves for kitchen as well as hall, a rude fireplace having been made in one corner, the smoke from which has discoloured the walls and almost obliterated the ancient arabesques. A window with a balcony overhanging the balcony of the Darro, lets in the cool evening breeze, and here I take my frugal supper of fruit and milk, and mingle with the conversation of the family. There is a natural talent, or mother wit, as it is called, about the Spaniards, which renders them intellectual and agreeable companions, whatever may be their condition in life, or however imperfect may have been their education; add to this, they are never vulgar; nature has endowed them with an inherent dignity of spirit. The good Tia Antonia is a woman of strong and intelligent, though unculti-

vated mind, and the bright-eyed Dolores, though she has read but three or four books in the whole course of her life, has an engaging mixture of naiveté and good sense, and often surprises me by the pungency of her artless sallies. Sometimes the nephew entertains us by reading some old comedy of Calderon or Lope de Vega, to which he is evidently prompted by a desire to improve as well as amuse his cousin Dolores, though to his great mortification the little damsel generally falls asleep before the first act is completed. Sometimes Tia Antonia has a little bevy of humble friends and dependants, the inhabitants of the adjacent hamlet, or the wives of the invalid soldiers. These look up to her with great deference as the custodian of the palace, and pay their court to her by bringing the news of the place, or the rumours that may have straggled up from Granada. In listening to the evening gossipings, I have picked up many curious facts, illustrative of the manners of the people and the peculiarities of the neighbourhood.

These are simple details of simple pleasures; it is the nature of the place alone that gives them interest and importance. I tread haunted ground and am surrounded by romantic associations. From earliest boyhood, when, on the banks of the Hudson, I first pored over the pages of an old Spanish story about the wars of Granada, that city has ever been a subject of my waking dreams, and often have I trod in fancy the romantic halls of the Alhambra. Behold for once a day-dream realized; yet I can scarcely credit my senses or believe that I do indeed inhabit the palace of Boabdil, and look down from its balconies upon chivalric Granada. As I loiter through the oriental chambers, and hear the murmuring of fountains and the song of the nightingale: as I inhale the odour of the rose and feel the influence of the balmy climate, I am almost tempted to fancy myself in the Paradise of Mahomet, and that the plump little Dolores is one of the bright-eyed Houris, destined to administer to the happiness of true believers.

THE TRUANT.

SINCE writing the foregoing pages, we have had a scene of petty tribulation in the Alhambra which has thrown a cloud over the sunny countenance of Dolores. This little damsel has

a female passion for pets of all kinds, from the superabundant kindness of her disposition. One of the ruined courts of the Alhambra is thronged with her favourites. A stately peacock and his hen seem to hold regal sway here, over pompous turkeys, querulous guinea fowls, and a rabble rout of common cocks and hens. The great delight of Dolores, however, has for some time past been centred in a youthful pair of pigeons, who have lately entered into the holy state of wedlock, and who have even supplanted a tortoise shell cat and kitten in her affections.

As a tenement for them to commence housekeeping she had fitted up a small chamber adjacent to the kitchen, the window of which looked into one of the quiet Moorish courts. Here they lived in happy ignorance of any world beyond the court and its sunny roofs. In vain they aspired to soar above the battlements, or to mount to the summit of the towers. Their virtuous union was at length crowned by two spotless and milk white eggs, to the great joy of their cherishing little mistress. Nothing could be more praiseworthy than the conduct of the young married folks on this interesting occasion. They took turns to sit upon the nest until the eggs were hatched, and while their callow progeny required warmth and shelter. While one thus stayed at home, the other foraged abroad for food, and brought home abundant supplies.

This scene of conjugal felicity has suddenly met with a reverse. Early this morning, as Dolores was feeding the male pigeon, she took a fancy to give him a peep at the great world. Opening a window, therefore, which looks down upon the valley of the Darro, she launched him at once beyond the walls of the Alhambra. For the first time in his life the astonished bird had to try the full vigour of his wings. He swept down into the valley, and then rising upwards with a surge, soared almost to the clouds. Never before had he risen to such a height or experienced such delight in flying, and like a young spendthrift, just come to his estate, he seemed giddy with excess of liberty, and with the boundless field of action suddenly opened to him. For the whole day he has been circling about in capricious flights, from tower to tower and from tree to tree. Every attempt has been made in vain to lure him back, by scattering grain upon the roofs; he seems to have lost all thought of home, of his tender helpmate and his callow young. To add to the anxiety of Dolores, he has been joined by two palomas ladrones, or robber pigeons, whose instinct it

is to entice wandering pigeons to their own dove-cotes. The fugitive, like many other thoughtless youths on their first launching upon the world, seems quite fascinated with these knowing, but graceless, companions, who have undertaken to show him life and introduce him to society. He has been soaring with them over all the roofs and steeples of Granada. A thunder shower has passed over the city, but he has not sought his home; night has closed in, and still he comes not. To deepen the pathos of the affair, the female pigeon, after remaining several hours on the nest without being relieved, at length went forth to seek her recreant mate; but stayed away so long that the young ones perished for want of the warmth and shelter of the parent bosom.

At a late hour in the evening, word was brought to Dolores that the truant bird had been seen upon the towers of the Generaliffe. Now, it so happens that the *Administrador* of that ancient palace has likewise a dove-cote, among the inmates of which are said to be two or three of these inveigling birds, the terror of all neighbouring pigeon fanciers. Dolores immediately concluded that the two feathered sharpers who had been seen with her fugitive, were these bloods of the Generaliffe. A council of war was forthwith held in the chamber of Tia Antonia. The Generaliffe is a distinct jurisdiction from the Alhambra, and of course some punctilio, if not jealousy, exists between their custodians. It was determined, therefore, to send Pepe, the stuttering lad of the gardens, as ambassador to the *Administrador*, requesting that if such fugitive should be found in his dominions, he might be given up as a subject of the Alhambra. Pepe departed, accordingly, on his diplomatic expedition, through the moonlit groves and avenues, but returned in an hour with the afflicting intelligence that no such bird was to be found in the dove-cote of the Generaliffe. The *Administrador*, however, pledged his sovereign word, that if such vagrant should appear there, even at midnight, he should instantly be arrested and sent back prisoner to his little black-eyed mistress.

Thus stands this melancholy affair, which has occasioned much distress throughout the palace, and has sent the inconsolable Dolores to a sleepless pillow.

"Sorrow endureth for a night," says the proverb, "but joy ariseth in the morning." The first object that met my eyes on leaving my room this morning was Dolores with the truant pigeon in her hand, and her eyes sparkling with joy. He had

appeared at an early hour on the battlements, hovering shyly about from roof to roof, but at length entered the window and surrendered himself prisoner. He gained little credit, however, by his return, for the ravenous manner in which he devoured the food set before him, showed that, like the prodigal son, he had been driven home by sheer famine. Dolores upbraided him for his faithless conduct, calling him all manner of vagrant names, though woman-like, she fondled him at the same time to her bosom and covered him with kisses. I observed, however, that she had taken care to clip his wings to prevent all future soarings; a precaution which I mention for the benefit of all those who have truant wives or wandering husbands. More than one valuable moral might be drawn from the story of Dolores and her pigeon.

THE AUTHOR'S CHAMBER.

ON taking up my abode in the Alhambra, one end of a suite of empty chambers of modern architecture, intended for the residence of the governor, was fitted up for my reception. It was in front of the palace, looking forth upon the esplanade. The farther end communicated with a cluster of little chambers, partly Moorish, partly modern, inhabited by Tia Antonia and her family. These terminated in a large room which serves the good old dame for parlour, kitchen, and hall of audience. It had boasted of some splendour in the time of the Moors, but a fire-place had been built in one corner, the smoke from which had discoloured the walls, nearly obliterated the ornaments, and spread a sombre tint over the whole. From these gloomy apartments, a narrow blind corridor and a dark winding staircase led down an angle of the tower of Comares; groping down which, and opening a small door at the bottom, you are suddenly dazzled by emerging into the brilliant antechamber of the hall of ambassadors, with the fountain of the court of the Alberca sparkling before you.

I was dissatisfied with being lodged in a modern and frontier apartment of the palace, and longed to ensconce myself in the very heart of the building.

As I was rambling one day about the Moorish halls, I found, in a remote gallery, a door which I had not before noticed,

communicating apparently with an extensive apartment, locked up from the public. Here then was a mystery. Here was the haunted wing of the castle. I procured the key, however, without difficulty. The door opened to a range of vacant chambers of European architecture; though built over a Moorish arcade, along the little garden of Lindaraxa. There were two lofty rooms, the ceilings of which were of deep panel-work of cedar, richly and skilfully carved with fruits and flowers, intermingled with grotesque masks or faces; but broken in many places. The walls had evidently, in ancient times, been hung with damask, but were now naked, and scrawled over with the insignificant names of aspiring travellers; the windows, which were dismantled and open to wind and weather, looked into the garden of Lindaraxa, and the orange and citron trees flung their branches into the chambers. Beyond these rooms were two saloons, less lofty, looking also into the garden. In the compartments of the panelled ceiling were baskets of fruit and garlands of flowers, painted by no mean hand, and in tolerable preservation. The walls had also been painted in fresco in the Italian style, but the paintings were nearly obliterated. The windows were in the same shattered state as in the other chambers.

This fanciful suite of rooms terminated in an open gallery with balustrades, which ran at right angles along another side of the garden. The whole apartment had a delicacy and elegance in its decorations and there was something so choice and sequestered in its situation, along this retired little garden, that awakened an interest in its history. I found, on inquiry, that it was an apartment fitted up by Italian artists, in the early part of the last century, at the time when Philip V. and the beautiful Elizabetta of Parma were expected at the Alhambra; and was destined for the queen and the ladies of her train. One of the loftiest chambers had been her sleeping room, and a narrow staircase leading from it, though now walled up, opened to the delightful belvedere, originally a mirador of the Moorish sultanas, but fitted up as a boudoir for the fair Elizabetta, and which still retains the name of the Tocador, or toilette of the queen. The sleeping room I have mentioned, commanded from one window a prospect of the Generaliffe, and its embowered terraces; under another window played the alabaster fountain of the garden of Lindaraxa. That garden carried my thoughts still farther back, to the period of another reign of beauty; to the days of the Moorish

sultanas. "How beauteous is this garden!" says an Arabic inscription, "where the flowers of the earth vie with the stars of heaven! what can compare with the vase of yon alabaster fountain filled with crystal water? Nothing but the moon in her fulness, shining in the midst of an unclouded sky!"

Centuries had elapsed, yet how much of this scene of apparently fragile beauty remained! The garden of Lindaraxa was still adorned with flowers; the fountain still presented its crystal mirror: it is true, the alabaster had lost its whiteness, and the basin beneath, overrun with weeds, had become the nestling place of the lizard; but there was something in the very decay that enhanced the interest of the scene, speaking, as it did, of that mutability which is the irrevocable lot of man and all his works. The desolation, too, of these chambers, once the abode of the proud and elegant Elizabetta, had a more touching charm for me than if I had beheld them in their pristine splendour, glittering with the pageantry of a court—I determined at once to take up my quarters in this apartment.

My determination excited great surprise in the family; who could not imagine any rational inducement for the choice of so solitary, remote and forlorn an apartment. The good Tia Antonia considered it highly dangerous. The neighbourhood, she said, was infested by vagrants; the caverns of the adjacent hills swarmed with gipsies; the palace was ruinous and easy to be entered in many parts; and the rumour of a stranger quartered alone in one of the ruined apartments, out of the hearing of the rest of the inhabitants, might tempt unwelcome visitors in the night, especially as foreigners are always supposed to be well stocked with money. Dolores represented the frightful loneliness of the place; nothing but bats and owls flitting about; then there were a fox and a wild cat that kept about the vaults and roamed about at night.

I was not to be diverted from my humour, so calling in the assistance of a carpenter, and the ever officious Mateo Ximenes, the doors and windows were soon placed in a state of tolerable security.

With all these precautions, I must confess the first night I passed in these quarters was inexpressibly dreary. I was escorted by the whole family to my chamber, and there taking leave of me, and retiring along the waste antechamber and echoing galleries, reminded me of those hobgoblin stories, where the hero is left to accomplish the adventure of a haunted house.

Soon the thoughts of the fair Elizabetta and the beauties of her court, who had once graced these chambers, now by a perversion of fancy added to the gloom. Here was the scene of their transient gaiety and loveliness; here were the very traces of their elegance and enjoyment; but what and where were they?—Dust and ashes! tenants of the tomb! phantoms of the memory!

A vague and indescribable awe was creeping over me. I would fain have ascribed it to the thoughts of robbers, awakened by the evening's conversation, but I felt that it was something more unusual and absurd. In a word, the long buried impressions of the nursery were reviving and asserting their power over my imagination. Every thing began to be affected by the workings of my mind. The whispering of the wind among the citron trees beneath my window had something sinister. I cast my eyes into the garden of Lindaraxa; the groves presented a gulf of shadows; the thickets had indistinct and ghastly shapes. I was glad to close the window; but my chamber itself became infected. A bat had found its way in, and flitted about my head and athwart my solitary lamp; the grotesque faces carved in the cedar ceiling seemed to mope and mow at me.

Rousing myself, and half smiling at this temporary weakness, I resolved to brave it, and, taking lamp in hand, sallied forth to make a tour of the ancient palace. Notwithstanding every mental exertion, the task was a severe one. The rays of my lamp extended to but a limited distance around me; I walked as it were in a mere halo of light, and all beyond was thick darkness. The vaulted corridors were as caverns; the vaults of the halls were lost in gloom; what unseen foe might not be lurking before or behind me; my own shadow playing about the walls, and the echoes of my own footsteps disturbed me.

In this excited state, as I was traversing the great Hall of Ambassadors, there were added real sounds to these conjectural fancies. Low moans and indistinct ejaculations seemed to rise as it were from beneath my feet; I paused and listened. They then appeared to resound from without the tower. Sometimes they resembled the howlings of an animal, at others they were stifled shrieks, mingled with articulate ravings. The thrilling effect of these sounds in that still hour and singular place, destroyed all inclination to continue my lonely perambulation. I returned to my chamber with more alacrity than I had sallied

forth, and drew my breath more freely when once more within its walls, and the door bolted behind me.

When I awoke in the morning, with the sun shining in at my window, and lighting up every part of the building with its cheerful and truth-telling beams, I could scarcely recall the shadows and fancies conjured up by the gloom of the preceding night; or believe that the scenes around me, so naked and apparent, could have been clothed with such imaginary horrors.

Still the dismal howlings and ejaculations I had heard were not ideal; but they were soon accounted for, by my handmaid Dolores; being the ravings of a poor maniac, a brother of her aunt, who was subject to violent paroxysms, during which he was confined in a vaulted room beneath the Hall of Ambassadors.

THE ALHAMBRA BY MOONLIGHT.

I HAVE given a picture of my apartment on my first taking possession of it; a few evenings have produced a thorough change in the scene and in my feelings. The moon, which then was invisible, has gradually gained upon the nights, and now rolls in full splendour above the towers, pouring a flood of tempered light into every court and hall. The garden beneath my window is gently lighted up; the orange and citron trees are tipped with silver; the fountain sparkles in the moon beams, and even the blush of the rose is faintly visible.

I have sat for hours at my window inhaling the sweetness of the garden, and musing on the chequered features of those whose history is dimly shadowed out in the elegant memorials around. Sometimes I have issued forth at midnight when every thing was quiet, and have wandered over the whole building. Who can do justice to a moonlight night in such a climate, and in such a place! The temperature of an Andalusian midnight, in summer, is perfectly ethereal. We seem lifted up into a purer atmosphere; there is a serenity of soul, a buoyancy of spirits, an elasticity of frame that render mere existence enjoyment. The effect of moonlight, too, on the Alhambra has something like enchantment. Every rent and chasm of time, every mouldering tint and weather stain disappears; the marble resumes its original whiteness; the long colonnades brighten in the moon beams; the halls are illuminated with a softened

radiance, until the whole edifice reminds one of the enchanted palace of an Arabian tale.

At such time I have ascended to the little pavilion, called the Queen's Toilette, to enjoy its varied and extensive prospect. To the right, the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada would gleam like silver clouds against the darker firmament, and all the outlines of the mountain would be softened, yet delicately defined. My delight, however, would be to lean over the parapet of the *tocador*, and gaze down upon Granada, spread out like a map below me: all buried in deep repose, and its white palaces and convents sleeping as it were in the moonshine.

Sometimes I would hear the faint sounds of castanets from some party of dancers lingering in the Alameda; at other times I have heard the dubious tones of a guitar, and the notes of a single voice rising from some solitary street, and have pictured to myself some youthful cavalier serenading his lady's window; a gallant custom of former days, but now sadly on the decline except in the remote towns and villages of Spain.

Such are the scenes that have detained me for many an hour loitering about the courts and balconies of the castle, enjoying that mixture of reverie and sensation which steal away existence in a southern climate—and it has been almost morning before I have retired to my bed, and been lulled to sleep by the falling waters of the fountain of Lindaraxa.

INHABITANTS OF THE ALHAMBRA.

I HAVE often observed that the more proudly a mansion has been tenanted in the day of its prosperity, the humbler are its inhabitants in the day of its decline, and that the palace of the king commonly ends in being the nestling place of the beggar.

The Alhambra is in a rapid state of similar transition: whenever a tower falls to decay, it is seized upon by some tatterdemalion family, who become joint tenants with the bats and owls of its gilded halls, and hang their rags, those standards of poverty, out of its windows and loop-holes.

I have amused myself with remarking some of the motley characters that have thus usurped the ancient abode of royalty, and who seem as if placed here to give a farcical termination to the drama of human pride. One of these

even bears the mockery of a royal title. It is a little old woman named Maria Antonia Sabonea, but who goes by the appellation of la Reyna Cuquina, or the cockle queen. She is small enough to be a fairy, and a fairy she may be for aught I can find out, for no one seems to know her origin. Her habitation is a kind of closet under the outer staircase of the palace, and she sits in the cool stone corridor plying her needle and singing from morning till night, with a ready joke for every one that passes, for though one of the poorest, she is one of the merriest little women breathing. Her great merit is a gift for story-telling; having, I verily believe, as many stories at her command as the inexhaustible Scheherezade of the thousand and one nights. Some of these I have heard her relate in the evening tertulias of Doña Antonia, at which she is occasionally an humble attendant.

That there must be some fairy gift about this mysterious little old woman, would appear from her extraordinary luck, since, notwithstanding her being very little, very ugly, and very poor, she has had, according to her own account, five husbands and a half; reckoning as a half, one, a young dragoon who died during courtship.

A rival personage to this little fairy queen is a portly old fellow with a bottle nose, who goes about in a rusty garb, with a cocked hat of oil skin and a red cockade. He is one of the legitimate sons of the Alhambra, and has lived here all his life, filling various offices; such as Deputy Alguazil, sexton of the parochial church, and marker of a fives court established at the foot of one of the towers. He is as poor as a rat, but as proud as he is ragged, boasting of his descent from the illustrious house of Aguilar, from which sprang Gonsalvo of Cordova, the Grand Captain. Nay, he actually bears the name of Alonzo de Aguilar, so renowned in the history of the conquest, though the graceless wags of the fortress have given him the title of *el Padre Santo*, or the Holy Father, the usual appellation of the pope, which I had thought too sacred in the eyes of true catholics to be thus ludicrously applied. It is a whimsical caprice of fortune, to present in the grotesque person of this tatterdemalion a namesake and descendant of the proud Alonzo de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry, leading an almost mendicant existence about this once haughty fortress, which his ancestor aided to reduce; yet such might have been the lot of the descendants of Aga-

memnon and Achilles, had they lingered about the ruins of Troy.

Of this motley community I find the family of my gossiping squire Mateo Ximenes to form, from their numbers at least, a very important part. His boast of being a son of the Alhambra is not unfounded. This family has inhabited the fortress ever since the time of the conquest, handing down a hereditary poverty from father to son, not one of them having ever been known to be worth a marevedi. His father, by trade a riband weaver, and who succeeded the historical tailor as the head of the family, is now near seventy years of age, and lives in a hovel of reeds and plaster, built by his own hands, just above the iron gate. The furniture consists of a crazy bed, a table, and two or three chairs; a wooden chest, containing his clothes, and the archives of his family; that is to say, a few papers concerning old law-suits which he cannot read; but the pride of his heart is a blazon of the arms of the family, brilliantly coloured and suspended in a frame against the wall, clearly demonstrating by its quarterings the various noble houses with which this poverty-stricken brood claim affinity.

As to Mateo himself, he has done his utmost to perpetuate his line; having a wife, and a numerous progeny who inhabit an almost dismantled hovel in the hamlet. How they manage to subsist, He only who sees into all mysteries can tell—the subsistence of a Spanish family of the kind is always a riddle to me; yet they do subsist, and, what is more, appear to enjoy their existence. The wife takes her holyday stroll in the Paseo of Granada, with a child in her arms, and half a dozen at her heels, and the eldest daughter, now verging into womanhood, dresses her hair with flowers, and dances gaily to the castanets.

There are two classes of people to whom life seems one long holyday, the very rich and the very poor; one because they need do nothing, the other because they have nothing to do; but there are none who understand the art of doing nothing and living upon nothing better than the poor classes of Spain. Climate does one half and temperament the rest. Give a Spaniard the shade in summer, and the sun in winter, a little bread, garlic, oil and garbanzos, an old brown cloak and a guitar, and let the world roll on as it pleases. Talk of poverty, with him it has no disgrace. It sits upon him with a grandioso style, like his ragged cloak. He is a hidalgo even when in rags.

The "Sons of the Alhambra" are an eminent illustration of this practical philosophy. As the Moors imagined that the celestial paradise hung over this favoured spot, so I am inclined, at times, to fancy that a gleam of the golden age still lingers about this ragged community. They possess nothing, they do nothing, they care for nothing. Yet, though apparently idle all the week, they are as observant of all holy-days and saints' days as the most laborious artisan. They attend all fêtes and dancings in Granada and its vicinity, light bon-fires on the hills on St. John's eve, and have lately danced away the moonlight nights, on the harvest home of a small field of wheat within the precincts of the fortress.

Before concluding these remarks I must mention one of the amusements of the place which has particularly struck me. I had repeatedly observed a long, lean fellow perched on the top of one of the towers manœuvring two or three fishing rods, as though he was angling for the stars. I was for some time perplexed by the evolutions of this aerial fisherman, and my perplexity increased on observing others employed in like manner, on different parts of the battlements and bastions; it was not until I consulted Mateo Ximenes that I solved the mystery.

It seems that the pure and airy situation of this fortress has rendered it, like the castle of Macbeth, a prolific breeding-place for swallows and martlets, who sport about its towers in myriads, with the holyday glee of urchins just let loose from school. To entrap these birds in their giddy circlings, with hooks baited with flies, is one of the favourite amusements of the ragged "Sons of the Alhambra," who, with the good-for-nothing ingenuity of arrant idlers, have thus invented the art of angling in the sky.

THE BALCONY

IN the Hall of Ambassadors, at the central window, there is a balcony of which I have already made mention. It projects like a cage from the face of the tower, high in mid-air, above the tops of the trees that grow on the steep hill-side. It answers me as a kind of observatory, where I often take my seat to consider, not merely the heavens above, but the "earth beneath." Beside the magnificent prospect which it commands, of mountain, valley, and Vega, there is a busy little scene of

human life laid open to inspection immediately below. At the foot of the hill is an alameda or public walk, which, though not so fashionable as the more modern and splendid paseo of the Xenil, still boasts a varied and picturesque concourse, especially on holydays and Sundays. Hither resort the small gentry of the suburbs, together with priests and friars who walk for appetite and digestion; majos and majas, the beaux and belles of the lower classes in their Andalusian dresses; swagging contrabandistas, and sometimes half-muffled and mysterious loungers of the higher ranks, on some silent assignation.

It is a moving picture of Spanish life which I delight to study; and as the naturalist has his microscope to assist him in his curious investigations, so I have a small pocket telescope which brings the countenances of the motley groups so close as almost at times to make me think I can divine their conversation by the play and expression of their features. I am thus, in a manner, an invisible observer, and without quitting my solitude, can throw myself in an instant into the midst of society—a rare advantage to one of somewhat shy and quiet habits.

Then there is a considerable suburb lying below the Alhambra, filling the narrow gorge of the valley, and extending up the opposite hill of the Albaycin. Many of the houses are built in the Moorish style, round patios or courts cooled by fountains and open to the sky; and as the inhabitants pass much of their time in these courts and on the terraced roofs during the summer season, it follows that many a glance at their domestic life may be obtained by an aerial spectator like myself, who can look down on them from the clouds.

I enjoy, in some degree, the advantages of the student in the famous old Spanish story, who beheld all Madrid unroofed for his inspection; and my gossiping squire Mateo Ximenes officiates occasionally as my Asmodeus, to give me anecdotes of the different mansions and their inhabitants.

I prefer, however, to form conjectural histories for myself; and thus can sit up aloft for hours, weaving from casual incidents and indications that pass under my eye, the whole tissue of schemes, intrigues and occupations, carrying on by certain of the busy mortals below us. There is scarce a pretty face or striking figure that I daily see, about which I have not thus gradually framed a dramatic story; though some of my characters will occasionally act in direct opposition to the part assigned them, and disconcert my whole drama.

A few days since as I was reconnoitring with my glass the streets of the Albaycin, I beheld the procession of a novice about to take the veil; and remarked various circumstances that excited the strongest sympathy in the fate of the youthful being thus about to be consigned to a living tomb. I ascertained, to my satisfaction, that she was beautiful; and, by the paleness of her cheek, that she was a victim, rather than a votary. She was arrayed in bridal garments, and decked with a chaplet of white flowers; but her heart evidently revolted at this mockery of a spiritual union, and yearned after its earthly loves. A tall stern-looking man walked near her in the procession; it was evidently the tyrannical father, who, from some bigoted or sordid motive, had compelled this sacrifice. Amidst the crowd was a dark, handsome youth, in Andalusian garb, who seemed to fix on her an eye of agony. It was doubtless the secret lover from whom she was for ever to be separated. My indignation rose as I noted the malignant exultation painted in the countenances of the attendant monks and friars. The procession arrived at the chapel of the convent; the sun gleamed for the last time upon the chaplet of the poor novice as she crossed the fatal threshold and disappeared from sight. The throng poured in with cowl and cross and minstrelsy. The lover paused for a moment at the door; I could understand the tumult of his feelings, but he mastered them and entered. There was a long interval—I pictured to myself the scene passing within.—The poor novice despoiled of her transient finery—clothed in the conventual garb; the bridal chaplet taken from her brow; her beautiful head shorn of its long silken tresses—I heard her murmur the irrevocable vow—I saw her extended on her bier; the death pall spread over; the funeral service performed that proclaimed her dead to the world; her sighs were drowned in the wailing anthem of the nuns and the sepulchral tones of the organ—the father looked, unmoved, without a tear—the lover—no—my fancy refused to portray the anguish of the lover—there the picture remained a blank.—The ceremony was over: the crowd again issued forth to behold the day and mingle in the joyous stir of life—but the victim with her bridal chaplet was no longer there—the door of the convent closed that secured her from the world for ever. I saw the father and the lover issue forth—they were in earnest conversation—the young man was violent in his gestures, when the wall of a house intervened and shut them from my sight.

That evening I noticed a solitary light twinkling from a remote lattice of the convent. There, said I, the unhappy novice sits weeping in her cell, while her lover paces the street below in unavailing anguish.

—The officious Mateo interrupted my meditations and destroyed, in an instant, the cobweb tissue of my fancy. With his usual zeal he had gathered facts concerning the scene that had interested me. The heroine of my romance was neither young nor handsome—she had no lover—she had entered the convent of her own free will, as a respectable asylum, and was one of the cheerfulest residents within its walls!

I felt at first half vexed with the nun for being thus happy in her cell, in contradiction to all the rules of romance; but diverted my spleen by watching, for a day or two, the pretty coquetries of a dark-eyed brunette, who, from the covert of a balcony shrouded with flowering shrubs and a silken awning, was carrying on a mysterious correspondence with a handsome, dark, well-whiskered cavalier in the street beneath her window. Sometimes I saw him at an early hour, stealing forth, wrapped to the eyes in a mantle. Sometimes he loitered at the corner, in various disguises, apparently waiting for a private signal to slip into the bower. Then there was a tinkling of a guitar at night, and a lantern shifted from place to place in the balcony. I imagined another romantic intrigue like that of *Almaviva*, but was again disconcerted in all my suppositions by being informed that the supposed lover was the husband of the lady, and a noted contrabandista, and that all his mysterious signs and movements had doubtless some smuggling scheme in view.

Scarce had the gray dawn streaked the sky and the earliest cock crowed from the cottages of the hill-side, when the suburbs gave sign of reviving animation; for the fresh hours of dawning are precious in the summer season in a sultry climate. All are anxious to get the start of the sun in the business of the day. The muleteer drives forth his loaded train for the journey; the traveller slings his carbine behind his saddle and mounts his steed at the gate of the hostel. The brown peasant urges his loitering donkeys, laden with panniers of sunny fruit and fresh dewy vegetables; for already the thrifty housewives are hastening to the market.

The sun is up and sparkles along the valley, topping the transparent foliage of the groves. The matin bells resound melodiously through the pure bright air, announcing the hour

of devotion. The muleteer halts his burdened animals before the chapel, thrusts his staff through his belt behind, and enters with hat in hand, smoothing his coal black hair, to hear a mass and put up a prayer for a prosperous wayfaring across the Sierra.

And now steals forth with fairy foot the gentle Señora, in trim busquina; with restless fan in hand and dark eye flashing from beneath her gracefully folded mantilla. She seeks some well frequented church to offer up her orisons; but the nicely adjusted dress; the dainty shoe and cobweb stocking; the raven tresses scrupulously braided, the fresh plucked rose that gleams among them like a gem, show that earth divides with heaven the empire of her thoughts.

As the morning advances, the din of labour augments on every side; the streets are thronged with man and steed, and beast of burden; the universal movement produces a hum and murmur like the surges of the ocean. As the sun ascends to his meridian the hum and bustle gradually decline; at the height of noon there is a pause; the panting city sinks into lassitude, and for several hours there is a general repose. The windows are closed; the curtains drawn; the inhabitants retired into the coolest recesses of their mansions. The full-fed monk snores in his dormitory. The brawny porter lies stretched on the pavement beside his burden. The peasant and the labourer sleep beneath the trees of the Alameda, lulled by the sultry chirping of the locust. The streets are deserted except by the water carrier, who refreshes the ear by proclaiming the merits of his sparkling beverage,—“Colder than mountain snow.”

As the sun declines, there is again a gradual reviving, and when the vesper bell rings out his sinking knell, all nature seems to rejoice that the tyrant of the day has fallen.

Now begins the bustle of enjoyment. The citizens pour forth to breathe the evening air, and revel away the brief twilight in the walks and gardens of the Darro and the Xenil.

As the night closes, the motley scene assumes new features. Light after light gradually twinkles forth; here a taper from a balconied window; there a votive lamp before the image of a saint. Thus by degrees the city emerges from the pervading gloom, and sparkles with scattered lights like the starry firmament. Now break forth from court, and garden, and street, and lane, the tinkling of innumerable guitars and the clicking of castanets, blending at this lofty height, in a faint

and general concert. "Enjoy the moment," is the creed of the gay and amorous Andalusian, and at no time does he practise it more zealously than in the balmy nights of summer, wooing his mistress with the dance, the love ditty and the passionate serenade.

I was seated one evening in the balcony enjoying the light breeze that came rustling along the side of the hill among the tree-tops, when my humble historiographer, Mateo, who was at my elbow, pointed out a spacious house in an obscure street of the Albaycin, about which he related, as nearly as I can recollect, the following anecdote.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MASON.

THERE was once upon a time a poor mason, or bricklayer, in Granada, who kept all the saints' days and holydays, and saint Monday into the bargain, and yet, with all his devotion, he grew poorer and poorer, and could scarcely earn bread for his numerous family. One night he was roused from his first sleep by a knocking at his door. He opened it and beheld before him a tall, meagre, cadaverous-looking priest. "Hark ye, honest friend," said the stranger, "I have observed that you are a good Christian, and one to be trusted; will you undertake a job this very night?"

"With all my heart, Señor Padre, on condition, that I am paid accordingly."

"That you shall be, but you must suffer yourself to be blindfolded."

To this the mason made no objection; so being hoodwinked, he was led by the priest through various rough lanes and winding passages until they stopped before the portal of a house. The priest then applied a key, turned a creaking lock and opened what sounded like a ponderous door. They entered, the door was closed and bolted, and the mason was conducted through an echoing corridor and spacious hall, to an interior part of the building. Here the bandage was removed from his eyes, and he found himself in a patio, or court, dimly lighted by a single lamp.

In the centre was a dry basin of an old Moorish fountain, under which the priest requested him to form a small vault, bricks and mortar being at hand for the purpose. He accord-

ingly worked all night, but without finishing the job. Just before daybreak the priest put a piece of gold into his hand, and having again blindfolded him, conducted him back to his dwelling.

"Are you willing," said he, "to return and complete your work?"

"Gladly, Señor Padre, provided I am as well paid."

"Well, then, to-morrow at midnight I will call again."

He did so, and the vault was completed. "Now," said the priest, "you must help me to bring forth the bodies that are to be buried in this vault."

The poor mason's hair rose on his head at these words; he followed the priest with trembling steps, into a retired chamber of the mansion, expecting to behold some ghastly spectacle of death, but was relieved, on perceiving three or four portly jars standing in one corner. They were evidently full of money, and it was with great labour that he and the priest carried them forth and consigned them to their tomb. The vault was then closed, the pavement replaced and all traces of the work obliterated.

The mason was again hoodwinked and led forth by a route different from that by which he had come. After they had wandered for a long time through a perplexed maze of lanes and alleys, they halted. The priest then put two pieces of gold into his hand. "Wait here," said he, "until you hear the cathedral bell toll for matins. If you presume to uncover your eyes before that time, evil will befall you." So saying he departed.

The mason waited faithfully, amusing himself by weighing the gold pieces in his hand and clinking them against each other. The moment the cathedral bell rung its matin peal, he uncovered his eyes and found himself on the banks of the Xenil; from whence he made the best of his way home, and revelled with his family for a whole fortnight on the profits of his two nights' work, after which he was as poor as ever.

He continued to work a little and pray a good deal, and keep holydays and saints' days from year to year, while his family grew up as gaunt and ragged as a crew of gipsies.

As he was seated one morning at the door of his hovel, he was accosted by a rich old curmudgeon who was noted for owning many houses and being a griping landlord.

The man of money eyed him for a moment, from beneath a pair of shagged eyebrows.

"I am told, friend, that you are very poor."

"There is no denying the fact, Señor; it speaks for itself."

"I presume, then, you will be glad of a job, and will work cheap."

"As cheap, my master, as any mason in Granada."

"That's what I want. I have an old house fallen to decay, that costs me more money than it is worth to keep it in repair, for nobody will live in it; so I must contrive to patch it up and keep it together at as small expense as possible."

The mason was accordingly conducted to a huge deserted house that seemed going to ruin. Passing through several empty halls and chambers, he entered an inner court, where his eye was caught by an old Moorish fountain.

He paused for a moment. "It seems," said he, "as if I had been in this place before; but it is like a dream.—Pray who occupied this house formerly?"

"A pest upon him!" cried the landlord. "It was an old miserly priest, who cared for nobody but himself. He was said to be immensely rich, and, having no relations, it was thought he would leave all his treasure to the church. He died suddenly, and the priests and friars thronged to take possession of his wealth, but nothing could they find but a few ducats in a leathern purse. The worst luck has fallen on me; for since his death, the old fellow continues to occupy my house without paying rent, and there's no taking the law of a dead man. The people pretend to hear at night the clinking of gold all night long in the chamber where the old priest slept, as if he were counting over his money, and sometimes a groaning and moaning about the court. Whether true or false these stories have brought a bad name on my house, and not a tenant will remain in it."

"Enough," said the mason sturdily—"Let me live in your house rent free until some better tenant presents, and I will engage to put it in repair and quiet the troubled spirits that disturb it. I am a good Christian and a poor man, and am not to be daunted by the devil himself, even though he come in the shape of a big bag of money."

The offer of the honest mason was gladly accepted; he moved with his family into the house, and fulfilled all his engagements. By little and little he restored it to its former state. The clinking of gold was no longer heard at night in the chamber of the defunct priest, but began to be heard by day in the pocket of the living mason. In a word, he in

creased rapidly in wealth, to the admiration of all his neighbours, and became one of the richest men in Granada. He gave large sums to the church, by way, no doubt, of satisfying his conscience, and never revealed the secret of his wealth until on his deathbed, to his son and heir.

A RAMBLE AMONG THE HILLS.

I FREQUENTLY amuse myself towards the close of the day, when the heat has subsided, with taking long rambles about the neighbouring hills and the deep umbrageous valleys, accompanied by my historiographer Squire Mateo, to whose passion for gossiping, I, on such occasions, give the most unbounding license; and there is scarce a rock or ruin, or broken fountain, or lonely glen, about which he has not some marvellous story; or, above all, some golden legend; for never was poor devil so munificent in dispensing hidden treasures.

A few evenings since we took a long stroll of the kind, in which Mateo was more than usually communicative. It was towards sunset that we sallied forth from the great Gate of Justice, and ascending an alley of trees, Mateo paused under a clump of fig and pomegranate trees at the foot of a huge ruined tower, called the Tower of the Seven Vaults, (*de los sieteuelos*.) Here, pointing to a low archway at the foundation of the tower, he informed me, in an under tone, was the lurking-place of a monstrous sprite or hobgoblin called the *Belludo*, which had infested the tower ever since the time of the Moors; guarding, it is supposed, the treasures of a Moorish king. Sometimes it issues forth in the dead of the night, and scours the avenues of the Alhambra and the streets of Granada in the shape of a headless horse, pursued by six dogs, with terrific yells and howlings.

"But have you ever met with it yourself, Mateo, in any of your rambles?"

"No, señor; but my grandfather, the tailor, knew several persons who had seen it; for it went about much more in his time than at present: sometimes in one shape, sometimes in another. Every body in Granada has heard of the *Belludo*, for the old women and nurses frighten the children with it when they cry. Some say it is the spirit of a cruel Moorish

king, who killed his six sons, and buried them in these vaults, and that they hunt him at nights in revenge."

Mateo went on to tell many particulars about this redoubtable hobgoblin, which has, in fact, been time out of mind a favourite theme of nursery tale and popular tradition in Granada, and is mentioned in some of the antiquated guide-books. When he had finished, we passed on, skirting the fruitful orchards of the Generalife; among the trees of which two or three nightingales were pouring forth a rich strain of melody. Behind these orchards we passed a number of Moorish tanks, with a door cut into the rocky bosom of the hill, but closed up. These tanks Mateo informed me were favourite bathing-places of himself and his comrades in boyhood, until frightened away by a story of a hideous Moor, who used to issue forth from the door in the rock to entrap unwary bathers.

Leaving these haunted tanks behind us, we pursued our ramble up a solitary mule-path that wound among the hills, and soon found ourselves amidst wild and melancholy mountains, destitute of trees, and here and there tinted with scanty verdure. Every thing within sight was severe and sterile, and it was scarcely possible to realize the idea that but a short distance behind us was the Generalife, with its blooming orchards and terraced gardens, and that we were in the vicinity of delicious Granada; that city of groves and fountains. But such is the nature of Spain—wild and stern the moment it escapes from cultivation, the desert and the garden are ever side by side.

The narrow defile up which we were passing is called, according to Mateo, *el Barranco de la Tinaja*, or the ravine of the jar.

"And why so, Mateo?" inquired I.

"Because, señor, a jar full of Moorish gold was found here in old times." The brain of poor Mateo is continually running upon these golden legends.

"But what is the meaning of the cross I see yonder upon a heap of stones in that narrow part of the ravine?"

"Oh! that's nothing—a muleteer was murdered there some years since."

"So then, Mateo, you have robbers and murderers even at the gates of the Alhambra."

"Not at present, señor—that was, formerly, when there used to be many loose fellows about the fortress; but they've all been weeded out. Not but that the gipsies, who live in

caves in the hill-sides just out of the fortress, are, many of them, fit for any thing; but we have had no murder about here for a long time past. The man who murdered the muleteer was hanged in the fortress."

Our path continued up the barranco, with a bold, rugged height to our left, called the Silla del Moro, or chair of the Moor; from a tradition that the unfortunate Boabdil fled thither during a popular insurrection, and remained all day seated on the rocky summit, looking mournfully down upon his factious city.

We at length arrived on the highest part of the promontory above Granada, called the Mountain of the Sun. The evening was approaching; the setting sun just gilded the loftiest heights. Here and there a solitary shepherd might be descried driving his flock down the declivities to be folded for the night, or a muleteer and his lagging animals threading some mountain path, to arrive at the city gates before night-fall.

Presently the deep tones of the cathedral bell came swelling up the defiles, proclaiming the hour of Oracion, or prayer. The note was responded to from the belfry of every church, and from the sweet bells of the convents among the mountains. The shepherd paused on the fold of the hill, the muleteer in the midst of the road; each took off his hat, and remained motionless for a time, murmuring his evening prayer. There is always something solemn and pleasing in this custom; by which, at a melodious signal, every human being throughout the land, recites, at the same moment, a tribute of thanks to God for the mercies of the day. It diffuses a transient sanctity over the land, and the sight of the sun sinking in all his glory, adds not a little to the solemnity of the scene. In the present instance, the effect was heightened by the wild and lonely nature of the place. We were on the naked and broken summit of the haunted Mountain of the Sun, where ruined tanks and cisterns, and the mouldering foundations of extensive buildings, spoke of former populousness, but where all was now silent and desolate.

As we were wandering among these traces of old times, Mateo pointed out to me a circular pit, that seemed to penetrate deep into the bosom of the mountain. It was evidently a deep well, dug by the indefatigable Moors, to obtain their favourite element in its greatest purity. Mateo, however, had a different story, and much more to his humour. This was,

according to tradition, an entrance to the subterranean caverns of the mountain, in which Boabdil and his court lay bound in magic spell; and from whence they sallied forth at night, at allotted times, to revisit their ancient abodes.

The deepening twilight, which in this climate is of such short duration, admonished us to leave this haunted ground. As we descended the mountain defiles, there was no longer herdsman or muleteer to be seen, nor any thing to be heard but our own footsteps and the lonely chirping of the cricket. The shadows of the valleys grew deeper and deeper, until all was dark around us. The lofty summit of the Sierra Nevada alone retained a lingering gleam of day-light, its snowy peaks glaring against the dark blue firmament; and seeming close to us, from the extreme purity of the atmosphere.

"How near the Sierra looks this evening!" said Mateo, "it seems as if you could touch it with your hand, and yet it is many long leagues off." While he was speaking a star appeared over the snowy summit of the mountain, the only one yet visible in the heavens, and so pure, so large, so bright and beautiful as to call forth ejaculations of delight from honest Mateo.

"Que lucero hermoso!—que claro y limpio es!—no pueda ser lucero mas brillante!"—

(What a beautiful star! how clear and lucid!—no star could be more brilliant!)

I have often remarked this sensibility of the common people of Spain to the charms of natural objects. The lustre of a star—the beauty or fragrance of a flower—the crystal purity of a fountain, will inspire them with a kind of poetical delight—and then what euphonious words their magnificent language affords, with which to give utterance to their transports!

"But what lights are those, Mateo, which I see twinkling along the Sierra Nevada, just below the snowy region, and which might be taken for stars, only that they are ruddy and against the dark side of the mountain?"

"Those, Señor, are fires made by the men who gather snow and ice for the supply of Granada. They go up every afternoon with mules and asses, and take turns, some to rest and warm themselves by the fires, while others fill their panniers with ice. They then set off down the mountain, so as to reach the gates of Granada before sunrise. That Sierra Nevada, Señor, is a lump of ice in the middle of Andalusia, to keep it all cool in summer."

It was now completely dark; we were passing through the barranco where stood the cross of the murdered muleteer, when I beheld a number of lights moving at a distance and apparently advancing up the ravine. On nearer approach they proved to be torches borne by a train of uncouth figures arrayed in black; it would have been a procession dreary enough at any time, but was peculiarly so in this wild and solitary place.

Mateo drew near, and told me in a low voice that it was a funeral train bearing a corpse to the burying ground among the hills.

As the procession passed by, the lugubrious light of the torches, falling on the rugged features and funereal weeds of the attendants, had the most fantastic effect, but was perfectly ghastly as it revealed the countenance of the corpse, which, according to Spanish custom, was borne uncovered on an open bier. I remained for some time gazing after the dreary train as it wound up the dark defile of the mountain. It put me in mind of the old story of a procession of demons, bearing the body of a sinner up the crater of Stromboli.

"Ah, Señor," cried Mateo, "I could tell you a story of a procession once seen among these mountains—but then you would laugh at me, and say it was one of the legacies of my grandfather the tailor."

"By no means, Mateo. There is nothing I relish more than a marvellous tale."

"Well, Señor, it is about one of those very men we have been talking of, who gather snow on the Sierra Nevada. You must know that a great many years since, in my grandfather's time, there was an old fellow, Tio Nicolo by name, who had filled the panniers of his mules with snow and ice, and was returning down the mountain. Being very drowsy, he mounted upon the mule, and, soon falling asleep, went with his head nodding and bobbing about from side to side, while his sure-footed old mule stepped along the edge of precipices, and down steep and broken barrancos just as safe and steady as if it had been on plain ground. At length Tio Nicolo awoke, and gazed about him, and rubbed his eyes—and in good truth he had reason—the moon shone almost as bright as day, and he saw the city below him, as plain as your hand, and shining with its white buildings like a silver platter in the moonshine; but lord! Señor!—it was nothing like the city he left a few hours before. Instead of the cathedral with its great dome

and turrets, and the churches with their spires, and the convents with their pinnacles all surmounted with the blessed cross, he saw nothing but Moorish mosques, and minarets, and cupolas, all topped off with glittering crescents, such as you see on the Barbary flags. Well, Señor, as you may suppose, Tio Nicolo was mightily puzzled at all this, but while he was gazing down upon the city, a great army came marching up the mountain; winding along the ravines, sometimes in the moonshine, sometimes in the shade. As it drew nigh, he saw that there were horse and foot, all in Moorish armour. Tio Nicolo tried to scramble out of their way, but his old mule stood stock still and refused to budge, trembling at the same time like a leaf—for dumb beasts, Señor, are just as much frightened at such things as human beings. Well, Señor, the hobgoblin army came marching by; there were men that seemed to blow trumpets, and others to beat drums and strike cymbals, yet never a sound did they make; they all moved on without the least noise, just as I have seen painted armies move across the stage in the theatre of Granada, and all looked as pale as death. At last in the rear of the army, between two black Moorish horsemen, rode the grand inquisitor of Granada, on a mule as white as snow. Tio Nicolo wondered to see him in such company; for the inquisitor was famous for his hatred of Moors, and indeed of all kinds of infidels, Jews and heretics, and used to hunt them out with fire and scourge—however, Tio Nicolo felt himself safe, now that there was a priest of such sanctity at hand. So, making the sign of the cross, he called out for his benediction, when—hombre! he received a blow that sent him and his old mule over the edge of a steep bank, down which they rolled, head over heels, to the bottom. Tio Nicolo did not come to his senses until long after sunrise, when he found himself at the bottom of a deep ravine, his mule grazing beside him, and his panniers of snow completely melted. He crawled back to Granada sorely bruised and battered, and was glad to find the city looking as usual, with Christian churches and crosses. When he told the story of his night's adventure, every one laughed at him: some said he had dreamt it all, as he dozed on his mule, others thought it all a fabrication of his own. But what was strange, Señor, and made people afterwards think more seriously of the matter, was, that the grand inquisitor died within the year. I have often heard my grandfather, the tailor, say that there was more meant by that

hobgoblin army bearing off the resemblance of the priest, than folks dared to surmise."

"Then you would insinuate, friend Mateo, that there is a kind of Moorish limbo, or purgatory, in the bowels of these mountains; to which the padre inquisitor was borne off."

"God forbid—Señor—I know nothing of the matter—I only relate what I heard from my grandfather."

By the time Mateo had finished the tale which I have more succinctly related, and which was interlarded with many comments, and spun out with minute details, we reached the gate of the Alhambra.

THE COURT OF LIONS.

THE peculiar charm of this old dreamy palace, is its power of calling up vague reveries and picturings of the past, and thus clothing naked realities with the illusions of the memory and the imagination. As I delight to walk in these "vain shadows," I am prone to seek those parts of the Alhambra which are most favourable to this phantasmagoria of the mind; and none are more so than the Court of Lions and its surrounding halls. Here the hand of time has fallen the lightest, and the traces of Moorish elegance and splendour exist in almost their original brilliancy. Earthquakes have shaken the foundations of this pile, and rent its rudest towers, yet see—not one of those slender columns has been displaced, not an arch of that light and fragile colonnade has given way, and all the fairy fretwork of these domes, apparently as unsubstantial as the crystal fabrics of a morning's frost, yet exist after the lapse of centuries, almost as fresh as if from the hand of the Moslem artist.

I write in the midst of these mementos of the past, in the fresh hour of early morning, in the fated hall of the Abencerages. The blood-stained fountain, the legendary monument of their massacre, is before me; the lofty jet almost casts its dew upon my paper. How difficult to reconcile the ancient tale of violence and blood, with the gentle and peaceful scene around. Every thing here appears calculated to inspire kind and happy feelings, for every thing is delicate and beautiful. The very light falls tenderly from above, through the lantern

of a dome tinted and wrought as if by fairy hands. Through the ample and fretted arch of the portal, I behold the Court of Lions, with brilliant sunshine gleaming along its colonnades and sparkling in its fountains. The lively swallow dives into the court, and then surging upwards, darts away twittering over the roof; the busy bee toils humming among the flower-beds, and painted butterflies hover from plant to plant, and flutter up, and sport with each other in the sunny air.—It needs but a slight exertion of the fancy to picture some pensive beauty of the harem, loitering in these secluded haunts of oriental luxury.

He, however, who would behold this scene under an aspect more in unison with its fortunes, let him come when the shadows of evening temper the brightness of the court, and throw a gloom into the surrounding halls,—then nothing can be more serenely melancholy, or more in harmony with the tale of departed grandeur.

At such times I am apt to seek the Hall of Justice, whose deep shadowy arcades extend across the upper end of the court. Here were performed, in presence of Ferdinand and Isabella, and their triumphant court, the pompous ceremonies of high mass, on taking possession of the Alhambra. The very cross is still to be seen upon the wall, where the altar was erected, and where officiated the grand cardinal of Spain, and others of the highest religious dignitaries of the land.

I picture to myself the scene when this place was filled with the conquering host, that mixture of mitred prelate, and shorn monk, and steel-clad knight, and silken courtier: when crosses and croziers and religious standards were mingled with proud armorial ensigns and the banners of the haughty chiefs of Spain, and flaunted in triumph through these Moslem halls. I picture to myself Columbus, the future discoverer of a world, taking his modest stand in a remote corner, the humble and neglected spectator of the pageant. I see in imagination the Catholic sovereigns prostrating themselves before the altar and pouring forth thanks for their victory, while the vaults resound with sacred minstrelsy and the deep-toned *Te Deum*.

The transient illusion is over—the pageant melts from the fancy—monarch, priest, and warrior return into oblivion, with the poor Moslems over whom they exulted. The hall of their triumph is waste and desolate. The bat flits about its twilight vaults, and the owl hoots from the neighbouring tower of Comares. The Court of the Lions has also its share of super-

natural legends. I have already mentioned the belief in the murmuring of voices and clanking of chains, made at night by the spirits of the murdered Abencerrages. Mateo Ximenes, a few evening since, at one of the gatherings in Dame Antonia's apartment, related a fact which happened within the knowledge of his grandfather, the legendary tailor. There was an invalid soldier, who had charge of the Alhambra, to show it to strangers. As he was one evening about twilight passing through the Court of Lions, he heard footsteps in the Hall of the Abencerrages. Supposing some loungers to be lingering there, he advanced to attend upon them, when, to his astonishment, he beheld four Moors richly dressed, with gilded cuirasses and scimitars, and poniards glittering with precious stones. They were walking to and fro with solemn pace, but paused and beckoned to him. The old soldier, however, took to flight; and could never afterwards be prevailed upon to enter the Alhambra. Thus it is that men sometimes turn their backs upon fortune; for it is the firm opinion of Mateo that the Moors intended to reveal the place where their treasures lay buried. A successor to the invalid soldier was more knowing; he came to the Alhambra poor, but at the end of a year went off to Malaga, bought horses, set up a carriage, and still lives there, one of the richest as well as oldest men of the place: all which, Mateo sagely surmises, was in consequence of his finding out the golden secret of these phantom Moors.

On entering the Court of the Lions, a few evenings since, I was startled at beholding a turbaned Moor quietly seated near the fountain. It seemed, for a moment, as if one of the stories of Mateo Ximenes were realized, and some ancient inhabitant of the Alhambra had broken the spell of centuries, and become visible. It proved, however, to be a mere ordinary mortal; a native of Tetuan in Barbary, who had a shop in the Zacatin of Granada, where he sold rhubarb, trinkets, and perfumes. As he spoke Spanish fluently, I was enabled to hold conversation with him, and found him shrewd and intelligent. He told me that he came up the hill occasionally in the summer, to pass a part of the day in the Alhambra, which reminded him of the old palaces in Barbary, which were built and adorned in similar style, though with less magnificence.

As we walked about the palace he pointed out several of the Arabic inscriptions, as possessing much poetic beauty.

"Ah! Señor," said he, "when the Moors held Granada, they were a gayer people than they are now-a-days. They thought

only of love, of music, and of poetry. They made stanzas upon every occasion, and set them all to music. He who could make the best verses, and she who had the most tuneful voice, might be sure of favour and preferment. In those days, if any one asked for bread the reply was, 'Make me a couplet;' and the poorest beggar, if he begged in rhyme, would often be rewarded with a piece of gold."

"And is the popular feeling for poetry," said I, "entirely lost among you?"

"By no means, Señor; the people of Barbary, even those of the lower classes, still make couplets, and good ones too, as in the old time, but talent is not rewarded as it was then: the rich prefer the jingle of their gold to the sound of poetry or music."

As he was talking, his eye caught one of the inscriptions that foretold perpetuity to the power and glory of the Moslem monarchs, the masters of the pile. He shook his head and shrugged his shoulders as he interpreted it. "Such might have been the case," said he; "the Moslems might still have been reigning in the Alhambra, had not Boabdil been a traitor, and given up his capitol to the Christians. The Spanish monarchs would never have been able to conquer it by open force."

I endeavoured to vindicate the memory of the unlucky Boabdil from this aspersion, and to show that the dissensions which led to the downfall of the Moorish throne, originated in the cruelty of his tiger-hearted father; but the Moor would admit of no palliation.

"Abul Hassan," said he, "might have been cruel, but he was brave, vigilant, and patriotic. Had he been properly seconded, Granada would still have been ours; but his son Boabdil thwarted his plans, crippled his power, sowed treason in his palace, and dissension in his camp. May the curse of God light upon him for his treachery." With these words the Moor left the Alhambra.

The indignation of my turbaned companion agrees with an anecdote related by a friend, who, in the course of a tour in Barbary, had an interview with the pasha of Tetuan. The Moorish governor was particular in his inquiries about the soil, the climate and resources of Spain, and especially concerning the favoured regions of Andalusia, the delights of Granada and the remains of its royal palace. The replies awakened all those fond recollections, so deeply cherished by the Moors, of

the power and splendour of their ancient empire in Spain. Turning to his Moslem attendants, the pasha stroked his beard, and broke forth in passionate lamentations that such a sceptre should have fallen from the sway of true believers. He consoled himself, however, with the persuasion, that the power and prosperity of the Spanish nation were on the decline; that a time would come when the Moors would reconquer their rightful domains; and that the day was, perhaps, not far distant, when Mohammedan worship would again be offered up in the mosque of Cordova, and a Mohammedan prince sit on his throne in the Alhambra.

Such is the general aspiration and belief among the Moors of Barbary; who consider Spain, and especially Andalusia, their rightful heritage. of which they have been despoiled by treachery and violence. These ideas are fostered and perpetuated by the descendants of the exiled Moors of Granada, scattered among the cities of Barbary. Several of these reside in Tetuan, preserving their ancient names, such as Paez, and Medina, and refraining from intermarriage with any families who cannot claim the same high origin. Their vaunted lineage is regarded with a degree of popular deference rarely shown in Mohammedan communities to any hereditary distinction except in the royal line.

These families, it is said, continue to sigh after the terrestrial paradise of their ancestors, and to put up prayers in their mosques on Fridays, imploring Allah to hasten the time when Granada shall be restored to the faithful; an event to which they look forward as fondly and confidently as did the Christian crusaders to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. Nay, it is added, that some of them retain the ancient maps and deeds of the estates and gardens of their ancestors at Granada, and even the keys of the houses; holding them as evidences of their hereditary claims, to be produced at the anticipated day of restoration.

BOABDIL EL CHICO.

MY conversation with the Moor in the Court of Lions set me to musing on the singular fate of Boabdil. Never was surname more applicable than that bestowed upon him by his subjects, of "El Zogoybi," or, "the unlucky." His misfortunes

began almost in his cradle. In his tender youth he was imprisoned and menaced with death by an inhuman father, and only escaped through a mother's stratagem; in after years his life was embittered and repeatedly endangered by the hostilities of a usurping uncle; his reign was distracted by external invasions and internal feuds; he was alternately the foe, the prisoner, the friend, and always the dupe of Ferdinand, until conquered and dethroned by the mingled craft and force of that perfidious monarch. An exile from his native land, he took refuge with one of the princes of Africa, and fell obscurely in battle fighting in the cause of a stranger. His misfortunes ceased not with his death. If Boabdil cherished a desire to leave an honourable name on the historic page, how cruelly has he been defrauded of his hopes! Who is there that has turned the least attention to the romantic history of the Moorish domination in Spain, without kindling with indignation at the alleged atrocities of Boabdil? Who has not been touched with the woes of his lovely and gentle queen, subjected by him to a trial of life and death, on a false charge of infidelity? Who has not been shocked by the alleged murder of his sister and her two children, in a transport of passion? Who has not felt his blood boil at the inhuman massacre of the gallant Abencerrages, thirty-six of whom, it is affirmed, he caused to be beheaded in the Court of the Lions? All these charges have been reiterated in various forms; they have passed into ballads, dramas, and romances, until they have taken too thorough possession of the public mind to be eradicated.

There is not a foreigner of education that visits the Alhambra, but asks for the fountain where the Abencerrages were beheaded; and gazes with horror at the grated gallery where the queen is said to have been confined; not a peasant of the Vega or the Sierra, but sings the story in rude couplets to the accompaniment of his guitar, while his hearers learn to excrete the very name of Boabdil.

Never, however, was name more foully and unjustly slandered. I have examined all the authentic chronicles and letters written by Spanish authors contemporary with Boabdil; some of whom were in the confidence of the Catholic sovereigns, and actually present in the camp throughout the war; I have examined all the Arabian authorities I could get access to through the medium of translation, and can find nothing to justify these dark and hateful accusations.

The whole of these tales may be traced to a work commonly

called "The Civil Wars of Granada," containing a pretended history of the feuds of the Zegries and Abencerrages during the last struggle of the Moorish empire. This work appeared originally in Spanish, and professed to be translated from the Arabic by one Gines Perez de Hita, an inhabitant of Murcia. It has since passed into various languages, and Florian has taken from it much of the fable of his Gonsalvo of Cordova. It has, in a great measure, usurped the authority of real history, and is currently believed by the people, and especially the peasantry of Granada. The whole of it, however, is a mass of fiction, mingled with a few disfigured truths, which give it an air of veracity. It bears internal evidence of its falsity, the manners and customs of the Moors being extravagantly misrepresented in it, and scenes depicted totally incompatible with their habits and their faith, and which never could have been recorded by a Mahometan writer.

I confess there seems to me something almost criminal in the wilful perversions of this work. Great latitude is undoubtedly to be allowed to romantic fiction, but there are limits which it must not pass, and the names of the distinguished dead, which belong to history, are no more to be calumniated than those of the illustrious living. One would have thought, too, that the unfortunate Boabdil had suffered enough for his justifiable hostility to Spaniards, by being stripped of his kingdom, without having his name thus wantonly traduced and rendered a bye-word and a theme of infamy in his native land, and in the very mansion of his fathers!

It is not intended hereby to affirm that the transactions imputed to Boabdil are totally without historic foundation, but as far as they can be traced, they appear to have been the arts of his father, Abul Hassan, who is represented, by both Christian and Arabian chroniclers, as being of a cruel and ferocious nature. It was he who put to death the cavaliers of the illustrious line of the Abencerrages, upon suspicion of their being engaged in a conspiracy to dispossess him of his throne.

The story of the accusation of the queen of Boabdil, and of her confinement in one of the towers, may also be traced to an incident in the life of his tiger-hearted father. Abul Hassan, in his advanced age, married a beautiful Christian captive of noble descent, who took the Moorish appellation of Zorayda, by whom he had two sons. She was of an ambitious spirit, and anxious that her children should succeed to the crown. For this purpose she worked upon the suspicious temper of the

king; inflaming him with jealousies of his children by his other wives and concubines, whom she accused of plotting against his throne and life. Some of them were slain by the ferocious father. Ayxa la Horra, the virtuous mother of Boabdil, who had once been his cherished favourite, became likewise the object of his suspicion. He confined her and her son in the tower of Comares, and would have sacrificed Boabdil to his fury, but that his tender mother lowered him from the tower, in the night, by means of the scarfs of herself and her attendants, and thus enabled him to escape to Guadix.

Such is the only shadow of a foundation that I can find for the story of the accused and captive queen; and in this it appears that Boabdil was the persecuted instead of the persecutor.

Throughout the whole of his brief, turbulent, and disastrous reign, Boabdil gives evidences of a mild and amiable character. He in the first instance won the hearts of the people by his affable and gracious manners; he was always peaceable, and never inflicted any severity of punishment upon those who occasionally rebelled against him. He was personally brave, but he wanted moral courage, and in times of difficulty and perplexity, was wavering and irresolute. This feebleness of spirit hastened his downfall, while it deprived him of that heroic grace which would have given a grandeur and dignity to his fate, and rendered him worthy of closing the splendid drama of the Moslem domination in Spain.

MEMENTOS OF BOABDIL.

WHILE my mind was still warm with the subject of the unfortunate Boabdil, I set forth to trace the mementos connected with his story, which yet exist in this scene of his sovereignty and his misfortunes. In the picture gallery of the Palace of the Generalife, hangs his portrait. The face is mild, handsome and somewhat melancholy, with a fair complexion and yellow hair; if it be a true representation of the man, he may have been wavering and uncertain, but there is nothing of cruelty or unkindness in his aspect.

I next visited the dungeon wherein he was confined in his youthful days, when his cruel father meditated his destruction.

It is a vaulted room in the tower of Comares, under the Hall of Ambassadors. A similar room, separated by a narrow passage, was the prison of his mother, the virtuous Ayxa la Horra. The walls are of prodigious thickness, and the small windows secured by iron bars. A narrow stone gallery, with a low parapet, extends round three sides of the tower just below the windows, but at a considerable height from the ground. From this gallery, it is presumed, the queen lowered her son with the scarfs of herself and her female attendants, during the darkness of night, to the hillside, at the foot of which waited a domestic with a fleet steed to bear the prince to the mountains.

As I paced this gallery, my imagination pictured the anxious queen leaning over the parapet, and listening, with the throbings of a mother's heart, to the last echo of the horse's hoofs, as her son scoured along the narrow valley of the Darro.

My next search was for the gate by which Boabdil departed from the Alhambra, when about to surrender his capital. With the melancholy caprice of a broken spirit, he requested of the Catholic monarchs that no one afterwards might be permitted to pass through this gate. His prayer, according to ancient chronicles, was complied with, through the sympathy of Isabella, and the gate walled up. For some time I inquired in vain for such a portal; at length my humble attendant, Mateo, learned among the old residents of the fortress, that a ruinous gateway still existed, by which, according to tradition, the Moorish king had left the fortress, but which had never been opened within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

He conducted me to the spot. The gateway is in the centre of what was once an immense tower, called *la Torre de los Siete Suelos*, or, the Tower of the Seven Moors. It is a place famous in the superstitious stories of the neighbourhood, for being the scene of strange apparitions and Moorish enchantments.

This once redoubtable tower is now a mere wreck, having been blown up with gunpowder, by the French, when they abandoned the fortress. Great masses of the wall lie scattered about, buried in the luxuriant herbage, or overshadowed by vines and fig-trees. The arch of the gateway, though rent by the shock, still remains; but the last wish of poor Boabdil has been again, though unintentionally, fulfilled, for the portal has been closed up by loose stones gathered from the ruins, and remains impassable.

Following up the route of the Moslem monarch as it remains

on record, I crossed on horseback the hill of Les Martyrs, keeping along the garden of the convent of the same name, and thence down a rugged ravine, beset by thickets of aloes and Indian figs, and lined by caves and hovels swarming with gipsies. It was the road taken by Boabdil to avoid passing through the city. The descent was so steep and broken that I was obliged to dismount and lead my horse.

Emerging from the ravine, and passing by the Puerta de los Molinos, (the Gate of the Mills,) I issued forth upon the public promenade, called the Prado, and pursuing the course of the Xenil, arrived at a small Moorish mosque, now converted into the chapel, or hermitage of San Sebastian. A tablet on the wall relates that on this spot Boabdil surrendered the keys of Granada to the Castilian sovereigns.

From thence I rode slowly across the Vega to a village where the family and household of the unhappy king had awaited him; for he had sent them forward on the preceding night from the Alhambra, that his mother and wife might not participate in his personal humiliation, or be exposed to the gaze of the conquerors.

Following on in the route of the melancholy band of royal exiles, I arrived at the foot of a chain of barren and dreary heights, forming the skirt of the Alpuxarra mountains. From the summit of one of these, the unfortunate Boabdil took his last look at Granada. It bears a name expressive of his sorrows—La Cuesta de las Lagrimas, (the Hill of Tears.) Beyond it a sandy road winds across a rugged cheerless waste, doubly dismal to the unhappy monarch, as it led to exile; behind, in the distance, lies the “enamelled Vega,” with the Xenil shining among its bowers, and Granada beyond.

I spurred my horse to the summit of a rock, where Boabdil uttered his last sorrowful exclamation, as he turned his eyes from taking their farewell gaze. It is still denominated *el ultimo suspiro del Moro*, (the last sigh of the Moor.) Who can wonder at his anguish at being expelled from such a kingdom and such an abode? With the Alhambra he seemed to be yielding up all the honours of his line, and all the glories and delights of life.

It was here, too, that his affliction was imbittered by the reproach of his mother Ayxa, who had so often assisted him in times of peril, and had vainly sought to instil into him her own resolute spirit. “You do well,” said she, “to weep as a woman over what you could not defend as a man!”—A speech that

savours more of the pride of the princess, than the tenderness of the mother.

When this anecdote was related to Charles V., by Bishop Guevara, the emperor joined in the expression of scorn at the weakness of the wavering Boabdil. "Had I been he, or he been I," said the haughty potentate, "I would rather have made this Alhambra my sepulchre, than have lived without a kingdom in the Alpuxarra.

How easy it is for them in power and prosperity to preach heroism to the vanquished! How little can they understand that life itself may rise in value with the unfortunate, when nought but life remains.

THE TOWER OF LAS INFANTAS.

IN an evening's stroll up a narrow glen, overshadowed by fig-trees, pomegranates, and myrtles, that divides the land of the fortress from those of the Generaliffe, I was struck with the romantic appearance of a Moorish tower in the outer wall of the Alhambra, that rose high above the tree-tops, and caught the ruddy rays of the setting sun. A solitary window, at a great height, commanded a view of the glen, and as I was regarding it a young female looked out, with her head adorned with flowers. She was evidently superior to the usual class of people that inhabit the old towers of the fortress; and this sudden and picturesque glimpse of her, reminded me of the descriptions of captive beauties in fairy tales. The fanciful associations of my mind were increased on being informed by my attendant, Mateo, that this was the tower of the princesses, (la Torre de las Infantas,) so called from having been, according to tradition, the residence of the daughters of the Moorish kings. I have since visited the tower. It is not generally shown to strangers, though well worthy attention, for the interior is equal for beauty of architecture and delicacy of ornament, to any part of the palace. The elegance of its central hall with its marble fountain, its lofty arches and richly fretted dome; the arabesques and stucco work of the small, but well-proportioned chambers, though injured by time and neglect, all accord with the story of its being anciently the abode of royal beauty.

The little old fairy queen who lives under the staircase of the Alhambra, and frequents the evening tertulias of Dame Antonia, tells some fanciful traditions about three Moorish princesses who were once shut up in this tower by their father, a tyrant king of Granada, and were only permitted to ride out at night about the hills, when no one was permitted to come in their way, under pain of death. They still, according to her account, may be seen occasionally when the moon is in the full, riding in lonely places along the mountain side, on palfreys richly caparisoned, and sparkling with jewels, but they vanish on being spoken to.

—But before I relate any thing farther respecting these princesses, the reader may be anxious to know something about the fair inhabitant of the tower with her head drest with flowers, who looked out from the lofty window. She proved to be the newly married spouse of the worthy adjutant of invalids; who, though well stricken in years, had had the courage to take to his bosom a young and buxom Andalusian damsel. May the good old cavalier be happy in his choice, and find the tower of the Princesses a more secure residence for female beauty than it seems to have proved in the time of the Moslems, if we may believe the following legend.

THE HOUSE OF THE WEATHERCOCK.

On the brow of the lofty hill of the Albaycin, the highest part of the city of Granada, stand the remains of what was once a royal palace, founded shortly after the conquest of Spain by the Arabs. It is now converted into a manufactory, and has fallen into such obscurity that it cost me much trouble to find it, notwithstanding that I had the assistance of the sagacious and all-knowing Mateo Ximenes. This edifice still bears the name by which it has been known for centuries, namely, la Casa del Gallo de Viento; that is, the House of the Weathercock.

It was so called from a bronze figure of a warrior on horseback, armed with shield and spear, erected on one of its turrets, and turning with every wind; bearing an Arabic motto, which, translated into Spanish, was as follows:

Dici el Sabio Aben Habuz
Que así se defiende el Anduluz.

In this way, says Aben Habuz the wise,
The Andalusian his foe defies.

This Aben Habuz was a captain who served in the invading army of Taric, and was left as alcaide of Granada. He is supposed to have intended this warlike effigy as a perpetual memorial to the Moorish inhabitants, that surrounded as they were by foes, and subject to sudden invasion, their safety depended upon being always ready for the field.

Other traditions, however, give a different account of this Aben Habuz and his palace, and affirm that his bronze horseman was originally a talisman of great virtue, though in after ages it lost its magic properties and degenerated into a weathercock. The following are the traditions alluded to.

THE LEGEND OF THE ARABIAN ASTROLOGER.

In old times, many hundred years ago, there was a Moorish king named Aben Habuz, who reigned over the kingdom of Granada. He was a retired conqueror, that is to say, one who, having in his more youthful days led a life of constant foray and depredation, now that he was grown old and superannuated, "languished for repose," and desired nothing more than to live at peace with all the world, to husband his laurels, and to enjoy in quiet the possessions he had wrested from his neighbours.

It so happened, however, that this most reasonable and pacific old monarch had young rivals to deal with—princes full of his early passion for fame and fighting, and who had some scores to settle which he had run up with their fathers; he had also some turbulent and discontented districts of his own territories among the Alpuxarra mountains, which, during the days of his vigour, he had treated with a high hand; and which, now that he languished for repose, were prone to rise in rebellion and to threaten to march to Granada and drive him from his throne. To make the matter worse, as Granada is surrounded by wild and craggy mountains which hide the approach of an enemy, the unfortunate Aben Habuz was kept in a constant state of vigilance and alarm, not knowing in what quarter hostilities might break out.

It was in vain that he built watch-towers on the mountains and stationed guards at every pass, with orders to make fires by night, and smoke by day, on the approach of an enemy. His alert foes would baffle every precaution, and come breaking out of some unthought-of defile,—ravage his lands beneath his very nose, and then make off with prisoners and booty to the mountains. Was ever peaceable and retired conqueror in a more uncomfortable predicament!

While the pacific Aben Habuz was harassed by these perplexities and molestations, an ancient Arabian physician arrived at his court. His gray beard descended to his girdle, and he had every mark of extreme age, yet he had travelled almost the whole way from Egypt on foot, with no other aid than a staff marked with hieroglyphics. His fame had preceded him. His name was Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub; he was said to have lived ever since the days of Mahomet, and to be the son of Abu Ayub, the last of the companions of the prophet. He had, when a child, followed the conquering army of Amru into Egypt, where he had remained many years studying the dark sciences, and particularly magic, among the Egyptian priests. It was moreover said that he had found out the secret of prolonging life, by means of which he had arrived to the great age of upwards of two centuries; though, as he did not discover the secret until well stricken in years, he could only perpetuate his gray hairs and wrinkles.

This wonderful old man was very honourably entertained by the king; who, like most superannuated monarchs, began to take physicians into great favour. He would have assigned him an apartment in his palace, but the astrologer preferred a cave in the side of the hill, which rises above the city of Granada, being the same on which the Alhambra has since been built. He caused the cave to be enlarged so as to form a spacious and lofty hall with a circular hole at the top, through which, as through a well, he could see the heavens and behold the stars even at mid-day. The wall of this hall were covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics, with cabalistic symbols, and with the figures of the stars in their signs. This hall he furnished with many implements, fabricated under his direction by cunning artificers of Granada, but the occult properties of which were only known to himself. In a little while the sage Ibrahim became the bosom counsellor of the king, to whom he applied for advice in every emergency. Aben Habuz was once inveighing against the injustice of his neighbours, and bewail-

ing the restless vigilance he had to observe to guard himself against their invasions;—when he had finished, the astrologer remained silent for a moment, and then replied, “Know, O king, that when I was in Egypt I beheld a great marvel devised by a pagan priestess of old. On a mountain above the city of Borsa, and overlooking the great valley of the Nile, was a figure of a ram, and above it a figure of a cock, both of molten brass and turning upon a pivot. Whenever the country was threatened with invasion, the ram would turn in the direction of the enemy and the cock would crow; upon this the inhabitants of the city knew of the danger, and of the quarter from which it was approaching, and could take timely notice to guard against it.”

“God is great!” exclaimed the pacific Aben Habuz; “what a treasure would be such a ram to keep an eye upon these mountains around me, and then such a cock to crow in time of danger! Allah Achbar! how securely I might sleep in my palace with such sentinels on the top!”

“Listen, O king,” continued the astrologer gravely. “When the victorious Amru (God’s peace be upon him!) conquered the city of Borsa, this talisman was destroyed; but I was present, and examined it, and studied its secret and mystery, and can make one of like, and even of greater virtues.”

“O wise son of Abu Ayub,” cried Aben Habuz, “better were such a talisman than all the watch-towers on the hills, and sentinels upon the borders. Give me such a safeguard, and the riches of my treasury are at thy command.”

The astrologer immediately set to work to gratify the wishes of the monarch; shutting himself up in his astrological hall, and exerting the necromantic arts he had learnt in Egypt, he summoned to his assistance the spirits and demons of the Nile. By his command they transported to his presence a mummy from a sepulchral chamber in the centre of one of the Pyramids. It was the mummy of the priest who had aided by magic art in rearing that stupendous pile.

The astrologer opened the outer cases of the mummy, and unfolded its many wrappers. On the breast of the corpse was a book written in Chaldaic characters. He seized it with trembling hand, then returning the mummy to its case, ordered the demons to transport it again to its dark and silent sepulchre in the Pyramid, there to await the final day of resurrection and judgment.

This book, say the traditions, was the book of knowledge

given by God to Adam after his fall. It had been handed down from generation to generation, to King Solomon the Wise, and by the aid of the wonderful secrets in magic and art revealed in it, he had built the temple of Jerusalem. How it had come into the possession of the builder of the Pyramids, He only knows who knows all things.

Instructed by this mystic volume, and aided by the genii which it subjected to his command, the astrologer soon erected a great tower upon the top of the palace of Aben Habuz, which stood on the brow of the hill of the Albaycin. The tower was built of stones brought from Egypt, and taken, it is said, from one of the Pyramids. In the upper part of the tower was a circular hall, with windows looking toward every point of the compass, and before each window was a table, on which was arranged, as on a chess-board, a mimic army of horse and foot, with the effigy of the potentate that ruled in that direction; all carved of wood. To each of these tables there was a small lance, no bigger than a bodkin, on which were engraved certain mysterious Chaldaic characters. This hall was kept constantly closed by a gate of brass with a great lock of steel, the key of which was in possession of the king.

On the top of the tower was a bronze figure of a Moorish horseman, fixed on a pivot, with a shield on one arm, and his lance elevated perpendicularly. The face of this horseman was towards the city, as if keeping guard over it; but if any foe were at hand, the figure would turn in that direction and would level the lance as if for action.

When this talisman was finished, Aben Habuz was all impatient to try its virtues; and longed as ardently for an invasion as he had ever sighed after repose. His desire was soon gratified. Tidings were brought early one morning, by the sentinel appointed to watch the tower, that the face of the brazen horseman was turned towards the mountains of Elvira, and that his lance pointed directly against the pass of Lopè.

"Let the drums and trumpets sound to arms, and all Granada be put on the alert," said Aben Habuz.

"O king," said the astrologer, "let not your city be quieted, nor your warriors called to arms; we need no aid of force to deliver you from your enemies. Dismiss your attendants and let us proceed alone to the secret hall of the tower."

The ancient Aben Habuz mounted the staircase of the tower, leaning on the arm of the still more ancient Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub. They unlocked the brazen door and entered. The

window that looked towards the pass of Lopè was open. "In this direction," said the astrologer, "lies the danger—approach, O king, and behold the mystery of the table."

King Aben Habuz approached the seeming chess-board, on which were arranged the small wooden effigies; when lo! they were all in motion. The horses pranced and curveted, the warriors brandished their weapons, and there was a faint sound of drums and trumpets, and a clang of arms and neighing of steeds, but all no louder, nor more distinct, than the hum of the bee or summer-fly in the drowsy ear of him who lies at noon-tide in the shade.

"Behold, O king," said the astrologer, "a proof that thy enemies are even now in the field. They must be advancing through yonder mountains by the pass of Lopè. Would you produce a panic and confusion amongst them, and cause them to abandon their enterprise and retreat without loss of life, strike these effigies with the butt end of this magic lance; but would you cause bloody feud and carnage among them, strike with the point."

A livid streak passed across the countenance of the pacific Aben Habuz; he seized the mimic lance with trembling eagerness, and tottered towards the table; his gray beard wagged with chuckling exultation. "Son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed he, "I think we will have a little blood!"

So saying he thrust the magic lance into some of the pigmy effigies, and belaboured others with the butt end; upon which the former fell, as dead, upon the board, and the rest turning upon each other, began, pell-mell, a chance-medley fight.

It was with difficulty the astrologer could stay the hand of the most pacific of monarchs, and prevent him from absolutely exterminating his foes. At length he prevailed upon him to leave the tower, and to send out scouts to the mountains by the pass of Lopè.

They returned with the intelligence that a Christian army had advanced through the heart of the Sierra, almost within sight of Granada, when a dissension having broken out among them, they had turned their weapons against each other, and after much slaughter, had retreated over the border.

Aben Habuz was transported with joy on thus proving the efficacy of the talisman. "At length," said he, "I shall lead a life of tranquillity, and have all my enemies in my power. Oh! wise son of Abu Ayub, what can I bestow on thee in reward for such a blessing?"

"The wants of an old man and a philosopher, O king, are few and simple—grant me but the means of fitting up my cave as a suitable hermitage, and I am content."

"How noble is the moderation of the truly wise!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, secretly pleased at the cheapness of the recompense. He summoned his treasurer, and bade him dispense whatever sums might be required by Ibrahim to complete and furnish his hermitage.

The astrologer now gave orders to have various chambers hewn out of the solid rock, so as to form ranges of apartments connected with his astrological hall. These he caused to be furnished with luxurious ottomans and divans; and the walls to be hung with the richest silks of Damascus. "I am an old man," said he, "and can no longer rest my bones on stone couches; and these damp walls require covering."

He also had baths constructed and provided with all kinds of perfumery and aromatic oils; "for a bath," said he, "is necessary to counteract the rigidity of age, and to restore freshness and suppleness to the frame withered by study."

He caused the apartments to be hung with innumerable silver and crystal lamps, which he filled with a fragrant oil prepared according to a receipt discovered by him in the tombs of Egypt. This oil was perpetual in its nature, and diffused a soft radiance like the tempered light of day. "The light of the sun," said he, "is too garish and violent for the eyes of an old man; and the light of the lamp is more congenial to the studies of a philosopher."

The treasurer of King Aben Habuz groaned at the sums daily demanded to fit up this hermitage, and he carried his complaints to the king. The royal word, however, was given—Aben Habuz shrugged his shoulders.—"We must have patience," said he; "this old man has taken his idea of a philosophic retreat from the interior of the Pyramids and the vast ruins of Egypt; but all things have an end, and so will the furnishing of his cavern."

The king was in the right; the hermitage was at length complete, and formed a sumptuous subterranean palace. "I am now content," said Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub, to the treasurer; "I will shut myself up in my cell and devote my time to study. I desire nothing more,—nothing,—except a trifling solace to amuse me at the intervals of mental labour."

"Oh! wise Ibrahim, ask what thou wilt; I am bound to furnish all that is necessary for thy solitude."

"I would fain have then a few dancing women," said the philosopher.

"Dancing women!" echoed the treasurer with surprise.

"Dancing women," replied the sage, gravely: "a few will suffice; for I am an old man and a philosopher, of simple habits and easily satisfied. Let them, however, be young and fair to look upon—for the sight of youth and beauty is refreshing to old age."

While the philosophic Ibrahim Ebn Ayub passed his time thus sagely in his hermitage, the pacific Aben Habuz carried on furious campaigns in effigy in his tower. It was a glorious thing for an old man like himself, of quiet habits, to have war made easy, and to be enabled to amuse himself in his chamber by brushing away whole armies like so many swarms of flies. For a time he riotied in the indulgence of his humours, and even taunted and insulted his neighbours to induce them to make incursions; but by degrees they grew wary from repeated disasters, until no one ventured to invade his territories. For many months the bronze horseman remained on the peace establishment with his lance elevated in the air, and the worthy old monarch began to repine at the want of his accustomed sport, and to grow peevish at his monotonous tranquillity.

At length, one day, the talismanic horseman veered suddenly round, and, lowering his lance, made a dead point towards the mountains of Guadix. Aben Habuz hastened to his tower, but the magic table in that direction remained quiet—not a single warrior was in motion. Perplexed at the circumstance, he sent forth a troop of horse to scour the mountains and reconnoitre. They returned after three days' absence. Rodovan, the captain of the troop, addressed the king: "We have searched every mountain pass," said he, "but not a helm or spear was stirring. All that we have found in the course of our foray was a Christian damsel of surpassing beauty, sleeping at noon-tide beside a fountain, whom we have brought away captive."

"A damsel of surpassing beauty!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, his eyes gleaming with animation: "let her be conducted into my presence." "Pardon me, O king!" replied Rodovan, "but our warfare at present is scanty; and yields but little harvest. I had hoped this chance gleaning would have been allowed for my services."

"Chance gleaning!" cried Aben Habuz. "What!—a damsel of surpassing beauty! By the head of my father! it is the

choice fruits of warfare, only to be garnered up into the royal keeping.—Let the damsel be brought hither instantly.”

The beautiful damsel was accordingly conducted into his presence. She was arrayed in the Gothic style, with all the luxury of ornament that had prevailed among the Gothic Spaniards at the time of the Arabian conquest. Pearls of dazzling whiteness were entwined with her raven tresses; and jewels sparkled on her forehead, rivalling the lustre of her eyes. Around her neck was a golden chain, to which was suspended a silver lyre which hung by her side.

The flashes of her dark refulgent eye were like sparks of fire on the withered, yet combustible breast of Aben Habuz, and set it in a flame. The swimming voluptuousness of her gait made his senses reel. “Fairest of women,” cried he, with rapture, “who and what art thou?”—

“The daughter of one of the Gothic princes who lately ruled over this land. The armies of my father have been destroyed as if by magic among these mountains, he has been driven into exile, and his daughter is a slave.”

“Be comforted, beautiful princess—thou art no longer a slave, but a sovereign; turn thine eyes graciously upon Aben Habuz, and reign over him and his dominions.”

“Beware, O king,” whispered Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub; “this may be some spirit conjured up by the magicians of the Goths, and sent for thy undoing. Or it may be one of those northern sorceresses, who assume the most seducing forms to beguile the unwary. Methinks I read witchcraft in her eye, and sorcery in every movement. Let my sovereign beware—this must be the enemy pointed out by the talisman.” “Son of Abu Ayub,” replied the king, “you are a wise man and a conjuror, I grant—but you are little versed in the ways of woman. In the knowledge of the sex, I will yield to no man; no, not to the wise Solomon himself, notwithstanding the number of his wives and his concubines. As to this damsel, I see much comfort in her for my old days, even such comfort as David, the father of Solomon, found in the society of Abishag the Shunamite.”

“Hearken, O king,” rejoined the astrologer, suddenly changing his tone—“I have given thee many triumphs over thy enemies, and by means of my talisman, yet thou hast never given me share of the spoils; grant me this one stray captive to solace me in my retirement, and I am content.”

“What!” cried Aben Habuz, “more women! hast thou not

already dancing women to solace thee — what more wouldst thou desire.”

“Dancing women, have I, it is true; but I have none that sing; and music is a balm to old age.—This captive, I perceive, beareth a silver lyre, and must be skilled in minstrelsy. Give her to me, I pray thee, to soothe my senses after the toil of study.”

The ire of the pacific monarch was kindled, and he loaded the philosopher with reproaches. The latter retired indignantly to his hermitage; but ere he departed, he again warned the monarch to beware of his beautiful captive. Where, in fact, is the old man in love that will listen to counsel? Aben Habuz had felt the full power of the witchery of the eye, and the sorcery of movement, and the more he gazed, the more he was enamoured.

He resigned himself to the full sway of his passions. His only study, was how to render himself amiable in the eyes of the Gothic beauty. He had not youth, it is true, to recommend him, but then he had riches; and when a lover is no longer young, he becomes generous. The Zacatin of Granada was ransacked for the most precious merchandise of the East. Silks, jewels, precious gems and exquisite perfumes, all that Asia and Africa yielded of rich and rare, were lavished upon the princess. She received all as her due, and regarded them with the indifference of one accustomed to magnificence. All kinds of spectacles and festivities were devised for her entertainment; minstrelsy, dancing, tournaments, bull-fights.—Granada, for a time, was a scene of perpetual pageant. The Gothic princess seemed to take a delight in causing expense, as if she sought to drain the treasures of the monarch. There were no bounds to her caprice, or to the extravagance of her ideas. Yet, notwithstanding all this munificence, the venerable Aben Habuz could not flatter himself that he had made any impression on her heart. She never frowned on him, it is true, but she had a singular way of baffling his tender advances. Whenever he began to plead his passion, she struck her silver lyre. There was a mystic charm in the sound: on hearing of it, an irresistible drowsiness seized upon the superannuated lover, he fell asleep, and only woke when the temporary fumes of passion had evaporated. Still the dream of love had a bewitching power over his senses; so he continued to dream on; while all Granada scoffed at his infatuation, and groaned at the treasures lavished for a song.

At length a danger burst over the head of Aben Habuz, against which his talisman yielded him no warning. A rebellion broke out in the very heart of his capital, headed by the bold Rodovan. Aben Habuz was, for a time, besieged in his palace, and it was not without the greatest difficulty that he repelled his assailants and quelled the insurrection.

He now felt himself compelled once more to resort to the assistance of the astrologer. He found him still shut up in his hermitage, chewing the cud of resentment. "O wise son of Abu Ayub," said he, "what thou hast foretold, has, in some sort, come to pass. This Gothic princess has brought trouble and danger upon me."

"Is the king then disposed to put her away from him?" said the astrologer with animation.

"Sooner would I part with my kingdom!" replied Aben Habuz.

"What then is the need of disturbing me in my philosophical retirement?" said the astrologer, peevishly.

"Be not angry, O sagest of philosophers. I would fain have one more exertion of thy magic art. Devise some means by which I may be secure from internal treason, as well as outward war—some safe retreat, where I may take refuge and be at peace."

The astrologer ruminated for a moment, and a subtle gleam shone from his eye under his busy eyebrows.

"Thou hast heard, no doubt, O king," said he, "of the palace and garden of Irem, whereof mention is made in that chapter of the Koran entitled 'the dawn of day.'"

"I have heard of that garden, — marvellous things are related of it by the pilgrims who visit Mecca, but I have thought them wild fables, such as those are prone to tell who visit remote regions."

"Listen, O king, and thou shalt know the mystery of that garden. In my younger days I was in Arabia the Happy, tending my father's camels. One of them strayed away from the rest, and was lost. I searched for it for several days about the deserts of Aden, until wearied and faint, I laid myself down and slept under a palm tree by the side of a scanty well. When I awoke, I found myself at the gate of a city. I entered and beheld noble streets and squares and market places, but all were silent and without an inhabitant. I wandered on until I came to a sumptuous palace, with a garden adorned with fountains and fish-ponds; and groves and flowers; and

orchards laden with delicious fruit; but still no one was to be seen. Upon which, appalled at this loneliness, I hastened to depart, and, after issuing forth at the gate of the city, I turned to look upon the place, but it was no longer to be seen, nothing but the silent desert extended before my eyes.

"In the neighbourhood I met with an aged dervise, learned in the traditions and secrets of the land, and related to him what had befallen me. 'This,' said he, 'is the far-famed garden of Irem, one of the wonders of the desert. It only appears at times to some wanderer like thyself, gladdening him with the sight of towers and palaces, and garden walls overhung with richly laden fruit trees, and then vanishes, leaving nothing but a lonely desert.—And this is the story of it:—In old times, when this country was inhabited by the Addiles, king Sheddad, the son of Ad, the great grandson of Noah, founded here a splendid city. When it was finished, and he saw its grandeur, his heart was puffed up with pride and arrogance, and he determined to build a royal palace, with gardens that should rival all that was related in the Koran of the celestial paradise. But the curse of heaven fell upon him for his presumption. He and his subjects were swept from the earth, and his splendid city, and palace, and garden, were laid under a perpetual spell, that hides them from the human sight, excepting that they are seen at intervals; by way of keeping his sin in perpetual remembrance.'

"This story, O king, and the wonders I had seen, ever dwell in my mind, and, in after years, when I had been in Egypt and made myself master of all kinds of magic spells, I determined to return and visit the garden of Irem. I did so, and found it revealed to my instructed sight. I took possession of the palace of Sheddad, and passed several days in his mock paradise. The genii who watch over the place, were obedient to my magic power, and revealed to me the spells by which the whole garden had been, as it were, conjured into existence, and by which it was rendered invisible. Such spells, O king, are within the scope of my art. What sayest thou? Wouldst thou have a palace and garden like those of Irem, filled with all manner of delights, but hidden from the eyes of mortals?"

"O wise son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed Aben Habuz, trembling with eagerness—"Contrive me such a paradise, and ask any reward, even to the half of my kingdom."

"Alas," replied the other, "thou knowest I am an old man, and a philosopher, and easily satisfied; all the reward I ask, is

the first beast of burden, with its load, that shall enter the magic portal of the palace."

The monarch gladly agreed to so moderate a stipulation, and the astrologer began his work. On the summit of the hill immediately above his subterranean hermitage he caused a great gateway or barbican to be erected; opening through the centre of a strong tower. There was an outer vestibule or porch with a lofty arch, and within it a portal secured by massive gates. On the key-stone of the portal the astrologer, with his own hand, wrought the figure of a huge key, and on the key-stone of the outer arch of the vestibule, which was loftier than that of the portal, he carved a gigantic hand. These were potent talismans, over which he repeated many sentences in an unknown tongue.

When this gateway was finished, he shut himself up for two days in his astrological hall, engaged in secret incantations; on the third he ascended the hill, and passed the whole day on its summit. At a late hour of the night, he came down and presented himself before Aben Habuz. "At length, O king," said he, "my labour is accomplished. On the summit of the hill stands one of the most delectable palaces that ever the head of man devised, or the heart of man desired. It contains sumptuous halls and galleries, delicious gardens, cool fountains and fragrant baths; in a word, the whole mountain is converted into a paradise. Like the garden of Irem, it is protected by a mighty charm, which hides it from the view and search of mortals, excepting such as possess the secret of its talismans."

"Enough," cried Aben Habuz, joyfully; "to-morrow morning, bright and early, we will ascend and take possession." The happy monarch scarcely slept that night. Scarcely had the rays of the sun begun to play about the snowy summit of the Sierra Nevada, when he mounted his steed, and accompanied only by a few chosen attendants, ascended a steep and narrow road leading up the hill. Beside him on a white palfrey, rode the Gothic princess, her dress sparkling with jewels, while round her neck was suspended her silver lyre. The astrologer walked on the other side of the king, assisting his steps with his hieroglyphic staff, for he never mounted steed of any kind.

Aben Habuz looked to see the towers of the promised palace brightening above him, and the embowered terraces of its gardens stretching along the heights, but as yet, nothing of the

kind was to be descried. "That is the mystery and safeguard of the place," said the astrologer, "nothing can be discerned until you have passed the spell-bound gateway, and been put in possession of the place."

As they approached the gateway, the astrologer paused, and pointed out to the king the mystic hand and key carved upon the portal and the arch. "These," said he, "are the talismans which guard the entrance to this paradise. Until yonder hand shall reach down and seize that key, neither mortal power, nor magic artifice, can prevail against the lord of this mountain."

While Aben Habuz was gazing with open mouth and silent wonder at these mystic talismans, the palfrey of the princess proceeded on, and bore her in at the portal, to the very centre of the barbican.

"Behold," cried the astrologer, "my promised reward!—the first animal with its burden, that should enter the magic gateway."

Aben Habuz smiled at what he considered a pleasantry of the ancient man; but when he found him to be in earnest, his gray beard trembled with indignation.

"Son of Abu Ayub," said he, sternly, "what equivocation is this? Thou knowest the meaning of my promise, the first beast of burden, with its load, that should enter this portal. Take the strongest mule in my stables, load it with the most precious things of my treasury, and it is thine; but dare not to raise thy thoughts to her, who is the delight of my heart."

"What need I of wealth," cried the astrologer, scornfully: "have I not the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise, and through it, the command of the secret treasures of the earth? The princess is mine by right; thy royal word is pledged; I claim her as my own."

The princess sat upon her palfrey, in the pride of youth and beauty, and a light smile of scorn curled her rosy lip, at this dispute between two gray beards for her charms. The wrath of the monarch got the better of his discretion. "Base son of the desert," cried he, "thou mayest be master of many arts, but know me for thy master—and presume not to juggle with thy king."

"My master!" echoed the astrologer, "my king! The monarch of a mole-hill to claim sway over him who possesses the talismans of Solomon. Farewell, Aben Habuz; reign over thy petty kingdom, and revel in thy paradise of fools—for me, I will laugh at thee in my philosophic retirement."

So saying, he seized the bridle of the palfrey, smote the earth with his staff, and sank with the Gothic princess through the centre of the barbican. The earth closed over them, and no trace remained of the opening by which they had descended. Aben Habuz was struck dumb for a time with astonishment. Recovering himself he ordered a thousand workmen to dig with pickaxe and spade into the ground where the astrologer had di appeared. They digged and digged, but in vain; the flinty bosom of the hill resisted their implements; or if they did penetrate a little way, the earth filled in again as fast as they threw it out. Aben Habuz sought the mouth of the cavern at the foot of the hill, leading to the subterranean palace of the astrologer, but it was no where to be found: where once had been an entrance, was now a solid surface of primeval rock. With the disappearance of Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub ceased the benefit of his talismans. The bronze horseman remained fixed with his face turned toward the hill, and his spear pointed to the spot where the astrologer had descended, as if there still lurked the deadliest foe of Aben Habuz. From time to time the sound of music and the tones of a female voice could be faintly heard from the bosom of the hill, and a peasant one day brought word to the king, that in the preceding night he had found a fissure in the rock, by which he had crept in until he looked down into a subterranean hall, in which sat the astrologer on a magnificent divan, slumbering and nodding to the silver lyre of the princess, which seemed to hold a magic sway over his senses.

Aben Habuz sought for the fissure in the rock, but it was again closed. He renewed the attempt to unearth his rival, but all in vain. The spell of the hand and key was too potent to be counteracted by human power. As to the summit of the mountain, the site of the promised palace and garden, it remained a naked waste: either the boasted Elysium was hidden from sight by enchantment, or was a mere fable of the astrologer. The world charitably supposed the latter, and some used to call the place "the king's folly," while others named it "the fool's Paradise."

To add to the chagrin of Aben Habuz, the neighbours, whom he had defied and taunted, and cut up at his leisure, while master of the talismanic horseman, finding him no longer protected by magic spell, made inroads into his territories from all sides, and the remainder of the life of the most pacific of monarchs, was a tissue of turmoils

At length, Aben Habuz died and was buried. Ages have since rolled away. The Alhambra has been built on the eventful mountain, and in some measure realizes the fabled delights of the garden of Irem. The spell-bound gateway still exists, protected, no doubt, by the mystic hand and key, and now forms the gate of justice, the grand entrance to the fortress. Under that gateway, it is said, the old astrologer remains in his subterranean hall; nodding on his divan, lulled by the silver lyre of the princess.

The old invalid sentinels, who mount guard at the gate, hear the strains occasionally in the summer nights, and, yielding to their soporific power, doze quietly at their posts. Nay, so drowsy an influence pervades the place, that even those who watch by day, may generally be seen nodding on the stone benches of the barbican, or sleeping under the neighbouring trees; so that it is, in fact, the drowsiest military post in all Christendom. All this, say the legends, will endure; from age to age the princess will remain captive to the astrologer, and the astrologer bound up in magic slumber by the princess, until the last day; unless the mystic hand shall grasp the fated key, and dispel the whole charm of this enchanted mountain.

LEGEND OF THE THREE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESSES.

In old times there reigned a Moorish king in Granada, whose name was Mohamed, to which his subjects added the appellation of el Haygari, or "the left-handed." Some say he was so called, on account of his being really more expert with his sinister, than his dexter hand; others, because he was prone to take everything by the wrong end; or, in other words, to mar wherever he meddled. Certain it is, either through misfortune or mismanagement, he was continually in trouble. Thrice was he driven from his throne, and on one occasion barely escaped to Africa with his life, in the disguise of a fisherman. Still he was as brave as he was blundering, and, though left-handed, wielded his scimitar to such purpose, that he each time re-established himself upon his throne, by dint of hard fighting. Instead, however, of learning wisdom from adversity, he hardened his neck, and stiffened his left-arm in wilfulness. The evils of a public nature which he thus brought upon him

self and his kingdom, may be learned by those who will delve into the Arabian annals of Granada; the present legend deals but with his domestic policy.

As this Mohamed was one day riding forth, with a train of his courtiers, by the foot of the mountain of Elvira, he met a band of horsemen returning from a foray into the land of the Christians. They were conducting a long string of mules laden with spoil, and many captives of both sexes, among whom, the monarch was struck with the appearance of a beautiful damsel richly attired, who sat weeping, on a low palfrey, and heeded not the consoling words of a duenna, who rode beside her.

The monarch was struck with her beauty, and on inquiring of the captain of the troop, found that she was the daughter of the alcaide of a frontier fortress that had been surprised and sacked in the course of the foray.

Mohamed claimed her as his royal share of the booty, and had her conveyed to his harem in the Alhambra. There every thing was devised to soothe her melancholy, and the monarch, more and more enamoured, sought to make her his queen.

The Spanish maid at first repulsed his addresses. He was an infidel—he was the open foe of her country—what was worse, he was stricken in years!

The monarch finding his assiduities of no avail, determined to enlist in his favour the duenna, who had been captured with the lady. She was an Andalusian by birth, whose Christian name is forgotten, being mentioned in Moorish legends, by no other appellation than that of the discreet Cadiga—and discreet, in truth she was, as her whole history makes evident. No sooner had the Moorish king held a little private conversation with her, than she saw at once the cogency of his reasoning, and undertook his cause with her young mistress.

“Go to, now!” cried she; “what is there in all this to weep and wail about?—Is it not better to be mistress of this beautiful palace with all its gardens and fountains, than to be shut up within your father’s old frontier tower? As to this Mohamed being an infidel—what is that to the purpose? You marry him—not his religion. And if he is waxing a little old, the sooner will you be a widow and mistress of yourself. At any rate you are in his power—and must either be a queen or a slave.—When in the hands of a robber, it is, better to sell one’s merchandies for a fair price, than to have it taken by main force.”

The arguments of the discreet Cadiga prevailed. The Spanish lady dried her tears and became the spouse of Mohamed

the left-handed. She even conformed in appearance to the faith of her royal husband, and her discreet duenna immediately became a zealous convert to the Moslem doctrines; it was then the latter received the Arabian name of Cadiga, and was permitted to remain in the confidential employ of her mistress.

In due process of time, the Moorish king was made the proud and happy father of three lovely daughters, all born at a birth. He could have wished they had been sons, but consoled himself with the idea that three daughters at a birth, were pretty well for a man somewhat stricken in years, and left-handed.

As usual with all Moslem monarchs, he summoned his astrologers on this happy event. They cast the nativities of the three princesses, and shook their heads. "Daughters, O king," said they, "are always precarious property; but these will most need your watchfulness when they arrive at a marriageable age.—At that time gather them under your wing, and trust them to no other guardianship."

Mohamed the left-handed was acknowledged by his courtiers to be a wise king, and was certainly so considered by himself. The prediction of the astrologers caused him but little disquiet, trusting to his ingenuity to guard his daughters and outwit the fates.

The threefold birth was the last matrimonial trophy of the monarch; his queen bore him no more children, and died within a few years, bequeathing her infant daughters to his love, and to the fidelity of the discreet Cadiga.

Many years had yet to elapse before the princesses would arrive at that period of danger, the marriageable age. "It is good, however, to be cautious in time," said the shrewd monarch; so he determined to have them reared in the royal castle of Salobreña. This was a sumptuous palace, incrustated as it were in a powerful Moorish fortress, on the summit of a hill that overlooks the Mediterranean sea.

It was a royal retreat, in which the Moslem monarchs shut up such of their relations as might endanger their safety; allowing them all kinds of luxuries and amusements, in the midst of which they passed their lives in voluptuous indolence.

Here the princesses remained, immured from the world, but surrounded by enjoyments; and attended by female slaves who anticipated their wishes. They had delightful gardens for their recreation, filled with the rarest fruits and flowers,

with aromatic groves and perfumed baths. On three sides the castle looked down upon a rich valley, enamelled with all kinds of culture, and bounded by the lofty Alpuxarra mountains; on the other side it overlooked the broad sunny sea.

In this delicious abode, in a propitious climate and under a cloudless sky, the three princesses grew up into wondrous beauty; but, though all reared alike, they gave early tokens of diversity of character. Their names were Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda; and such was the order of seniority, for there had been precisely three minutes between their births.

Zayda, the eldest, was of an intrepid spirit, and took the lead of her sisters in every thing, as she had done in entering first into the world. She was curious and inquisitive, and fond of getting at the bottom of things.

Zorayda had a great feeling for beauty, which was the reason, no doubt, of her delighting to regard her own image in a mirror or a fountain, and of her fondness for flowers and jewels, and other tasteful ornaments.

As to Zorahayda, the youngest, she was soft and timid, and extremely sensitive, with a vast deal of disposable tenderness, as was evident from her number of pet flowers, and pet birds, and pet animals, all of which she cherished with the fondest care. Her amusements, too, were of a gentle nature, and mixed up with musing and reverie. She would sit for hours in a balcony gazing on the sparkling stars of a summer night; or on the sea when lit up by the moon, and at such times the song of a fisherman faintly heard from the beach, or the notes of an arrafia or Moorish flute from some gliding bark, sufficed to elevate her feelings into ecstasy. The least uproar of the elements, however, filled her with dismay, and a clap of thunder was enough to throw her into a swoon.

Years moved on serenely, and Cadiga, to whom the princesses were confided, was faithful to her trust and attended them with unremitting care.

The castle of Salobreña, as has been said, was built upon a hill on the sea coast. One of the exterior walls straggled down the profile of the hill, until it reached a jutting rock overhanging the sea, with a narrow sandy beach at its foot, laved by the rippling billows. A small watch tower on this rock had been fitted up as a pavilion, with latticed windows to admit the sea breeze. Here the princesses used to pass the sultry hours of mid-day.

The curious Zayda was one day seated at one of the windows

of the pavilion, as her sisters, reclined on ottomans, were taking the siesta, or noon-tide slumber. Her attention had been attracted to a galley, which came coasting along, with measured strokes of the oar. As it drew near, she observed that it was filled with armed men. The galley anchored at the foot of the tower: a number of Moorish soldiers landed on the narrow beach, conducting several Christian prisoners. The curious Zayda awakened her sisters, and all three peeped cautiously through the close jealousies of the lattice, which screened them from sight. Among the prisoners were three Spanish cavaliers, richly dressed. They were in the flower of youth, and of noble presence, and the lofty manner in which they carried themselves, though loaded with chains and surrounded with enemies, bespoke the grandeur of their souls. The princesses gazed with intense and breathless interest. Cooped up as they had been in this castle among female attendants, seeing nothing of the male sex but black slaves, or the rude fishermen of the sea coast, it is not to be wondered at, that the appearance of three gallant cavaliers in the pride of youth and manly beauty should produce some commotion in their bosoms.

"Did ever nobler being tread the earth, than that cavalier in crimson?" cried Zayda, the eldest of the sisters. "See how proudly he bears himself, as though all around him were his slaves!"

"But notice that one in green," exclaimed Zorayda; "what grace! what elegance! what spirit!"

The gentle Zorahayda said nothing, but she secretly gave preference to the cavalier in green.

The princesses remained gazing until the prisoners were out of sight; then heaving long-drawn sighs, they turned round, looked at each other for a moment, and sat down musing and pensive on their ottomans.

The discreet Cadiga found them in this situation; they related to her what they had seen, and even the withered heart of the duenna was warmed. "Poor youths!" exclaimed she, "I'll warrant their captivity makes many a fair and high-born lady's heart ache in their native land! Ah, my children, you have little idea of the life these cavaliers lead in their own country. Such pranking at tournaments! such devotion to the ladies! such courting and serenading!"

The curiosity of Zayda was fully aroused. She was insatiable in her inquiries, and drew from the duenna the most

animated pictures of the scenes of her youthful days and native land. The beautiful Zorayda bridled up, and slyly regarded herself in a mirror, when the theme turned upon the charms of the Spanish ladies; while Zorahayda suppressed a struggling sigh at the mention of moonlight serenades.

Every day the curious Zayda renewed her inquiries; and every day the sage duenna repeated her stories, which were listened to with unmoved interest, though frequent sighs, by her gentle auditors. The discreet old woman at length awakened to the mischief she might be doing. She had been accustomed to think of the princesses only as children, but they had imperceptibly ripened beneath her eye, and now bloomed before her three lovely damsels of the marriageable age.—It is time, thought the duenna, to give notice to the king.

Mohamed the left-handed was seated one morning on a divan in one of the court halls of the Alhambra, when a noble arrived from the fortress of Salobreña, with a message from the sage Cadiga, congratulating him on the anniversary of his daughters' birth-day. The slave at the same time presented a delicate little basket decorated with flowers, within which, on a couch of vine and fig leaves, lay a peach, an apricot, and a nectarine, with their bloom and down, and dewy sweetness upon them, and all in the early stage of tempting ripeness. The monarch was versed in the oriental language of fruits and flowers, and readily divined the meaning of this emblematical offering.

"So," said he, "the critical period pointed out by the astrologers is arrived.—My daughters are at a marriageable age. What is to be done? They are shut up from the eyes of men,—they are under the eye of the discreet Cadiga—all very good—but still they are not under my own eye, as was prescribed by the astrologers.—'I must gather them under my wing, and trust to no other guardianship.'"

So saying, he ordered that a tower of the Alhambra should be prepared for their reception, and departed at the head of his guards for the fortress of Salobreña, to conduct them home in person.

About three years had elapsed since Mohamed had beheld his daughters, and he could scarcely credit his eyes at the wonderful change which that small space of time had made in their appearance. During the interval they had passed that wondrous boundary line in female life, which separates the crude, unformed, and thoughtless girl from the blooming,

blushing, meditative woman. It is like passing from the flat, bleak, uninteresting plains of La Mancha to the voluptuous valleys and swelling hills of Andalusia.

Zayda was tall and finely formed, with a lofty demeanour and a penetrating eye. She entered with a stately and decided step, and made a profound reverence to Mohamed, treating him more as her sovereign than her father. Zorayda was of the middle height, with an alluring look and swimming gait, and a sparkling beauty heightened by the assistance of the toilette. She approached her father with a smile, kissed his hand, and saluted him with several stanzas from a popular Arabian poet, with which the monarch was delighted. Zorahayda was shy and timid; smaller than her sisters, and with a beauty of that tender, beseeching kind which looks for fondness and protection. She was little fitted to command like her elder sister, or to dazzle like the second; but was rather formed to creep to the bosom of manly affection, to nestle within it, and be content. She drew near her father with a timid and almost faltering step, and would have taken his hand to kiss, but on looking up into his face, and seeing it beaming with a paternal smile, the tenderness of her nature broke forth, and she threw herself upon his neck.

Mohamed, the left-handed, surveyed his blooming daughters with mingled pride and perplexity; for while he exulted in their charms, he bethought himself of the prediction of the astrologers. "Three daughters!—three daughters!" muttered he, repeatedly to himself, "and all of a marriageable age! Here's tempting hesperian fruit, that requires a dragon watch!"

He prepared for his return to Granada, by sending heralds before him, commanding every one to keep out of the road by which he was to pass, and that all doors and windows should be closed at the approach of the princesses. This done, he set forth escorted by a troop of black horsemen of hideous aspect, and clad in shining armour.

The princesses rode beside the king, closely veiled, on beautiful white palfreys, with velvet caparisons embroidered with gold, and sweeping the ground; the bits and stirrups were of gold, and the silken bridles adorned with pearls and precious stones. The palfreys were covered with little silver bells that made the most musical tinkling as they ambled gently along. Wo to the unlucky wight, however, who lingered in the way when he heard the tinkling of these bells—the guards were ordered to cut him down without mercy.

The cavalcade was drawing near to Granada, when it overtook, on the banks of the river Xenil, a small body of Moorish soldiers, with a convoy of prisoners. It was too late for the soldiers to get out of the way, so they threw themselves on their faces on the earth, ordering their captives to do the like. Among the prisoners, were the three identical cavaliers whom the princesses had seen from the pavilion. They either did not understand, or were too haughty to obey the order, and remained standing and gazing upon the cavalcade as it approached.

The ire of the monarch was kindled at this flagrant defiance of his orders, and he determined to punish it with his own hand. Drawing his scimitar and pressing forward, he was about to deal a left-handed blow, that would have been fatal to at least one of the gazers, when the princesses crowded round him, and implored mercy for the prisoners; even the timid Zorahayda forgot her shyness and became eloquent in their behalf. Mohamed paused, with uplifted scimitar, when the captain of the guard threw himself at his feet. "Let not your majesty," said he, "do a deed that may cause great scandal throughout the kingdom. These are three brave and noble Spanish knights who have been taken in battle, fighting like lions; they are of high birth, and may bring great ransoms."

"Enough," said the king; "I will spare their lives, but punish their audacity—let them be taken to the Vermilion towers and put to hard labour."

Mohamed was making one of his usual left-handed blunders. In the tumult and agitation of this blustering scene, the veils of the three princesses had been thrown back, and the radiance of their beauty revealed; and in prolonging the parley, the king had given that beauty time to have its full effect. In those days, people fell in love much more suddenly than at present, as all ancient stories make manifest; it is not a matter of wonder, therefore, that the hearts of the three cavaliers were completely captivated; especially as gratitude was added to their admiration: it is a little singular, however, though no less certain, that each of them was enraptured with a several beauty. As to the princesses, they were more than ever struck with the noble demeanour of the captives, and cherished in their hearts all that they had heard of their valour and noble lineage.

The cavalcade resumed its march; the three princesses

rode pensively along on their tinkling palfreys, now and then stealing a glance behind in search of the Christian captives, and the latter were conducted to their allotted prison in the Vermilion towers.

The residence provided for the princesses, was one of the most dainty that fancy could devise. It was in a tower somewhat apart from the main palace of the Alhambra, though connected with it by the main wall that encircled the whole summit of the hill. On one side it looked into the interior of the fortress, and had at its foot a small garden filled with the rarest flowers. On the other side it overlooked a deep embowered ravine, that separated the grounds of the Alhambra from those of the Generaliffe. The interior of the tower was divided into small fairy apartments, beautifully ornamented in the light Arabian style, surrounding a lofty hall, the vaulted roof of which rose almost to the summit of the tower. The walls and ceiling of the hall were adorned with arabesques and fret-work sparkling with gold, and with brilliant pencilling. In the centre of the marble pavement, was an alabaster fountain, set round with aromatic shrubs and flowers, and throwing up a jet of water that cooled the whole edifice and had a lulling sound. Round the hall were suspended cages of gold and silver wire, containing singing birds of the finest plumage or sweetest note.

The princesses having been represented as always cheerful when in the castle of Salobreña, the king had expected to see them enraptured with the Alhambra. To his surprise, however, they began to pine, and grew green and melancholy, and dissatisfied with every thing around them. The flowers yielded them no fragrance; the song of the nightingale disturbed their night's rest, and they were out of all patience with the alabaster fountain, with its eternal drop, drop, and splash, splash, from morning till night, and from night till morning.

The king, who was somewhat of a testy, tyrannical old man, took this at first in high dudgeon; but he reflected that his daughters had arrived at an age when the female mind expands and its desires augment. "They are no longer children," said he to himself; "they are women grown, and require suitable objects to interest them." He put in requisition, therefore, all the dress makers, and the jewellers, and the artificers in gold and silver throughout the Zacatin of Granada, and the princesses were overwhelmed with robes

of silk, and of tissue and of brocade, and cachemire shawls, and necklaces of pearls, and diamonds, and rings, and bracelets, and anklets, and all manner of precious things.

All, however, was of no avail. The princesses continued pale and languid in the midst of their finery, and looked like three blighted rose buds, drooping from one stalk. The king was at his wit's end. He had in general a laudable confidence in his own judgment, and never took advice. "The whims and caprices of three marriageable damsels, however, are sufficient," said he, "to puzzle the shrewdest head."—So, for once in his life, he called in the aid of counsel.

The person to whom he applied was the experienced duenna.

"Cadiga," said the king, "I know you to be one of the most discreet women in the whole world, as well as one of the most trustworthy; for these reasons, I have always continued you about the persons of my daughters. Fathers cannot be too wary in whom they repose such confidence. I now wish you to find out the secret malady that is preying upon the princesses, and to devise some means of restoring them to health and cheerfulness."

Cadiga promised implicit obedience. In fact, she knew more of the malady of the princesses than they did themselves. Shutting herself up with them, however, she endeavoured to insinuate herself into their confidence.

"My dear children, what is the reason you are so dismal and downcast, in so beautiful a place, where you have every thing that heart can wish?"

The princesses looked vacantly round the apartment, and sighed.

"What more, then, would you have? Shall I get you the wonderful parrot that talks all languages, and is the delight of Granada?"

"Odious!" exclaimed the princess Zayda. "A horrid screaming bird that chatters words without ideas! One must be without brains to tolerate such a pest."

"Shall I send for a monkey from the rock of Gibraltar, to divert you with his antics?"

"A monkey! faugh!" cried Zorayda, "the detestable mimic of man. I hate the nauseous animal."

"What say you to the famous black singer, Casem, from the royal harem in Morocco. They say he has a voice as fine as a woman's."

"I am terrified at the sight of these black slaves," said the

delicate Zorahayda; "besides, I have lost all relish for music."

"Ah, my child, you would not say so," replied the old woman, slyly, "had you heard the music I heard last evening, from the three Spanish cavaliers whom we met on our journey.—But bless me, children! what is the matter that you blush so, and are in such a flutter?"

"Nothing, nothing, good mother, pray proceed."

"Well—as I was passing by the Vermilion towers, last evening, I saw the three cavaliers resting after their day's labour. One was playing on the guitar so gracefully, and the others sang by turns—and they did it in such style, that the very guards seemed like statues or men enchanted. Allah forgive me, I could not help being moved at hearing the songs of my native country.—And then to see three such noble and handsome youths in chains and slavery."

Here the kind-hearted old woman could not restrain her tears.

"Perhaps, mother, you could manage to procure us a sight of these cavaliers," said Zayda.

"I think," said Zorayda, "a little music would be quite reviving."

The timid Zorahayda said nothing, but threw her arms round the neck of Cadiga.

"Mercy on me!" exclaimed the discreet old woman; "what are you talking of, my children? Your father would be the death of us all, if he heard of such a thing. To be sure, these cavaliers are evidently well-bred and high-minded youths—but what of that! they are the enemies of our faith, and you must not even think of them, but with abhorrence."

There is an admirable intrepidity in the female will, particularly about the marriageable age, which is not to be deterred by dangers and prohibitions. The princesses hung round their old duenna, and coaxed and entreated, and declared that a refusal would break their hearts. What could she do? She was certainly the most discreet old woman in the whole world, and one of the most faithful servants to the king—but was she to see three beautiful princesses break their hearts for the mere tinkling of a guitar? Beside, though she had been so long among the Moors, and changed her faith, in imitation of her mistress, like a trusty follower, yet she was a Spaniard born, and had the lingerings of Christianity in her heart. So she set about to contrive how the wishes of the princesses might be gratified.

The Christian captives confined in the Vermilion towers, were under the charge of a big-whiskered, broad-shouldered renegado, called Hussein Baba, who was reported to have a most itching palm. She went to him, privately, and slipping a broad piece of gold into his hand, "Hussein Baba," said she, "my mistresses, the three princesses, who are shut up in the tower, and in sad want of amusement, have heard of the musical talents of the three Spanish cavaliers, and are desirous of hearing a specimen of their skill. I am sure you are too kind-hearted to refuse them so innocent a gratification."

"What, and to have my head set grinning over the gate of my own tower—for that would be the reward, if the king should discover it."

"No danger of any thing of the kind; the affair may be managed so that the whim of the princesses may be gratified, and their father be never the wiser. You know the deep ravine outside of the walls, that passes immediately below the tower. Put the three Christians to work there, and at the intervals of their labour let them play and sing, as if for their own recreation. In this way, the princesses will be able to hear them from the windows of the tower, and you may be sure of their paying well for your compliance."

As the good old woman concluded her harangue, she kindly pressed the rough hand of the renegado, and left within it another piece of gold.

Her eloquence was irresistible. The very next day the three cavaliers were put to work in the ravine. During the noon-tide heat when their fellow labourers were sleeping in the shade, and the guard nodded drowsily at his post, they seated themselves among the herbage at the foot of the tower, and sang a Spanish roundelay to the accompaniment of the guitar.

The glen was deep, the tower was high, but their voices rose distinctly in the stillness of the summer noon. The princesses listened from their balcony; they had been taught the Spanish language by their duenna, and were moved by the tenderness of the song.

The discreet Cadiga, on the contrary, was terribly shocked. "Allah preserve us," cried she, "they are singing a love ditty addressed to yourselves,—did ever mortal hear of such audacity? I will run to the slave master and have them soundly bastinadoed."

"What, bastinado such gallant cavaliers, and for singing so charmingly?" The three beautiful princesses were filled with

horror at the idea. With all her virtuous indignation, the good old woman was of a placable nature and easily appeased. Beside, the music seemed to have a beneficial effect upon her young mistresses. A rosy bloom had already come to their cheeks, and their eyes began to sparkle. She made no further objection, therefore, to the amorous ditty of the cavaliers.

When it was finished, the princesses remained silent for a time; at length Zorayda took up a lute, and with a sweet, though faint and trembling voice, warbled a little Arabian air, the burden of which was, "The rose is concealed among her leaves, but she listens with delight to the song of the nightingale."

From this time forward the cavaliers worked almost daily in the ravine. The considerate Hussein Baba became more and more indulgent, and daily more prone to sleep at his post. For some time a vague intercourse was kept up by popular songs and romances; which in some measure responded to each other, and breathed the feelings of the parties. By degrees the princesses showed themselves at the balcony, when they could do so without being perceived by the guards. They conversed with the cavaliers also by means of flowers, with the symbolical language of which they were mutually acquainted: the difficulties of their intercourse added to its charms, and strengthened the passion they had so singularly conceived; for love delights to struggle with difficulties, and thrives the most hardily on the scantiest soil.

The change effected in the looks and spirits of the princesses by this secret intercourse, surprised and gratified the left-handed king; but no one was more elated than the discreet Cadiga, who considered it all owing to her able management.

At length there was an interruption in this telegraphic correspondence, for several days the cavaliers ceased to make their appearance in the glen. The three beautiful princesses looked out from the tower in vain.—In vain they stretched their swan-like necks from the balcony; in vain they sang like captive nightingales in their cage; nothing was to be seen of their Christian lovers, not a note responded from the groves. The discreet Cadiga sallied forth in quest of intelligence, and soon returned with a face full of trouble. "Ah, my children!" cried she, "I saw what all this would come to, but you would have your way; you may now hang up your lutes on the willows. The Spanish cavaliers are ransomed by their families;

they are down in Granada, and preparing to return to their native country."

The three beautiful princesses were in despair at the tidings. The fair Zayda was indignant at the slight put upon them, in being thus deserted without a parting word. Zorayda rung her hands and cried, and looked in the glass, and wiped away her tears, and cried afresh. The gentle Zorahayda leaned over the balcony, and wept in silence, and her tears fell drop by drop, among the flowers of the bank where the faithless cavaliers had so often been seated.

The discreet Cadiga did all in her power to soothe their sorrow. "Take comfort, my children," said she, "this is nothing when you are used to it. This is the way of the world. Ah, when you are as old as I am, you will know how to value these men. I'll warrant these cavaliers have their loves among the Spanish beauties of Cordova and Seville, and will soon be serenading under their balconies, and thinking no more of the Moorish beauties in the Alhambra.—Take comfort, therefore, my children, and drive them from your hearts."

The comforting words of the discreet Cadiga only redoubled the distress of the princesses, and for two days they continued inconsolable. On the morning of the third, the good old woman entered their apartment all ruffling with indignation.

"Who would have believed such insolence in mortal man?" exclaimed she, as soon as she could find words to express herself; "but I am rightly served for having connived at this deception of your worthy father—never talk more to me of your Spanish cavaliers."

"Why, what has happened, good Cadiga?" exclaimed the princesses, in breathless anxiety.

"What has happened? treason has happened!—or what is almost as bad, treason has been proposed—and to me—the faithfulest of subjects—the trustiest of duennas—yes, my children—the Spanish cavaliers have dared to tamper with me; that I should persuade you to fly with them to Cordova, and become their wives."

Here the excellent old woman covered her face with her hands, and gave way to a violent burst of grief and indignation.

The three beautiful princesses turned pale and red, and trembled, and looked down; and cast shy looks at each other, but said nothing: meantime, the old woman sat rocking backward and forward in violent agitation, and now and then breaking

out into exclamations—"That ever I should live to be so insulted—I, the faithfulest of servants!"

At length the eldest princess, who had most spirit, and always took the lead, approached her, and laying her hand upon her shoulder—"Well, mother," said she, "supposing we were willing to fly with these Christian cavaliers—is such a thing possible?"

The good old woman paused suddenly in her grief, and looking up—"Possible!" echoed she, "to be sure it is possible. Have not the cavaliers already bribed Hussein Baba, the renegade captain of the guard, and arranged the whole plan?—But then to think of deceiving your father—your father, who has placed such confidence in me?"

Here the worthy old woman gave way to a fresh burst of grief, and began again to rock backwards and forwards, and to wring her hands.

"But our father has never placed any confidence in us," said the eldest princess; "but has trusted to bolts and bars, and treated us as captives."

"Why, that is true enough," replied the old woman, again pausing in her grief—"He has indeed treated you most unreasonably. Keeping you shut up here to waste your bloom in a moping old tower, like roses left to wither in a flower jar. But then to fly from your native land."

"And is not the land we fly to, the native land of our mother; where we shall live in freedom?—and shall we not each have a youthful husband in exchange for a severe old father?"

"Why, that again is all very true—and your father, I must confess, is rather tyrannical.—But what then"—relapsing into her grief—"would you leave me behind to bear the brunt of his vengeance?"

"By no means, my good Cadiga. Cannot you fly with us?"

"Very true, my child, and to tell the truth, when I talked the matter over with Hussein Baba, he promised to take care of me if I would accompany you in your flight: but then, be-think you, my children; are you willing to renounce the faith of your father?"

"The Christian faith was the original faith of our mother," said the eldest princess; "I am ready to embrace it; and so I am sure are my sisters."

"Right again!" exclaimed the old woman, brightening up. "It was the original faith of your mother; and bitterly did she lament, on her death-bed, that she had renounced it. I prom-

ised her then to take care of your souls, and I am rejoiced to see that they are now in a fair way to be saved. Yes, my children; I too was born a Christian—and have always been a Christian in my heart; and am resolved to return to the faith. I have talked on the subject with Hussein Baba, who is a Spaniard by birth, and comes from a place not far from my native town. He is equally anxious to see his own country and to be reconciled to the church, and the cavaliers have promised that if we are disposed to become man and wife on returning to our native land, they will provide for us handsomely."

In a word, it appeared that this extremely discreet and provident old woman had consulted with the cavaliers and the renegado, and had concerted the whole plan of escape. The eldest princess immediately assented to it, and her example as usual determined the conduct of her sisters. It is true, the youngest hesitated, for she was gentle and timid of soul, and there was a struggle in her bosom between filial feeling and youthful passion. The latter however, as usual, gained the victory, and with silent tears and stifled sighs she prepared herself for flight.

The rugged hill on which the Alhambra is built was in old times perforated with subterranean passages, cut through the rock, and leading from the fortress to various parts of the city, and to distant sally-ports on the banks of the Darro and the Xenil. They had been constructed at different times, by the Moorish kings, as means of escape from sudden insurrection, or of secretly issuing forth on private enterprises. Many of them are now entirely lost, while others remain, partly choked up with rubbish, and partly walled up—monuments of the jealous precautions and warlike stratagems of the Moorish government. By one of these passages, Hussein Baba had undertaken to conduct the princesses to a sally-port beyond the walls of the city, where the cavaliers were to be ready with fleet steeds to bear them all over the borders.

The appointed night arrived. The tower of the princesses had been locked up as usual, and the Alhambra was buried in deep sleep. Towards midnight the discreet Cadiga listened from a balcony of a window that looked into the garden. Hussein Baba, the renegado, was already below, and gave the appointed signal. The duenna fastened the end of a ladder of ropes to the balcony, lowered it into the garden, and descended. The two eldest princesses followed her with beating hearts; but when it came to the turn of the youngest princess, Zorahayda,

she hesitated and trembled. Several times she ventured a delicate little foot upon the ladder, and as often drew it back; while her poor little heart fluttered more and more the longer she delayed. She cast a wistful look back into the silken chamber; she had lived in it, to be sure, like a bird in a cage, but within it she was secure—who could not tell what dangers might beset her should she flutter forth into the wide world? Now she bethought her of her gallant Christian lover, and her little foot was instantly upon the ladder, and anon she thought of her father, and shrunk back. But fruitless is the attempt to describe the conflict in the bosom of one so young, and tender, and loving, but so timid and so ignorant of the world. In vain her sisters implored, the duenna scolded, and the renegado blasphemed beneath the balcony. The gentle little Moorish maid stood doubting and wavering on the verge of elopement; tempted by the sweetness of the sin, but terrified at its perils.

Every moment increased the danger of discovery. A distant tramp was heard.—“The patrols are walking the rounds,” cried the renegado; “if we linger longer we perish—princess, descend instantly, or we leave you.”

Zorahayda was for a moment in fearful agitation, then loosening the ladder of ropes, with desperate resolution she flung it from the balcony.

“It is decided,” cried she, “flight is now out of my power!—Allah guide and bless ye, my dear sisters!”

The two eldest princesses were shocked at the thoughts of leaving her behind, and would fain have lingered, but the patrol was advancing; the renegado was furious, and they were hurried away to the subterraneous passage. They groped their way through a fearful labyrinth cut through the heart of the mountain, and succeeded in reaching, undiscovered, an iron gate that opened outside of the walls. The Spanish cavaliers were waiting to receive them, disguised as Moorish soldiers of the guard commanded by the renegado.

The lover of Zorahayda was frantic when he learned that she had refused to leave the tower; but there was no time to waste in lamentations. The two princesses were placed behind their lovers; the discreet Cadiga mounted behind the renegado, and all set off at a round pace in the direction of the pass of Lope, which leads through the mountains towards Cordova.

They had not proceeded far when they heard the noise of drums and trumpets from the battlements of the Alhambra. “Our flight is discovered,” said the renegado “We have fleet

steeds, the night is dark, and we may distance all pursuit," replied the cavaliers.

They put spurs to their horses and scoured across the Vega. They attained to the foot of the mountain of Elvira, which stretches like a promontory into the plain. The renegado paused and listened. "As yet," said he, "there is no one on our traces, we shall make good our escape to the mountains." While he spoke a ball of fire sprang up in a light blaze on the top of the watch-tower of the Alhambra.

"Confusion!" cried the renegado, "that fire will put all the guards of the passes on the alert. Away, away, spur like mad; there is no time to be lost."

Away they dashed—the clattering of their horses' hoofs echoed from rock to rock as they swept along the road that skirts the rocky mountain of Elvira. As they galloped on, they beheld that the ball of fire of the Alhambra was answered in every direction; light after light blazed on the atalayas or watch-towers of the mountains.

"Forward! forward!" cried the renegado, with many an oath—"to the bridge!—to the bridge! before the alarm has reached there."

They doubled the promontory of the mountain, and arrived in sight of the famous Puente del Pinos, that crosses a rushing stream often dyed with Christian and Moslem blood. To their confusion the tower on the bridge blazed with lights and glittered with armed men. The renegado pulled up his steed, rose in his stirrups and looked about him for a moment, then beckoning to the cavaliers he struck off from the road, skirted the river for some distance, and dashed into its waters. The cavaliers called upon the princesses to cling to them, and did the same. They were borne for some distance down the rapid current, the surges roared round them, but the beautiful princesses clung to their Christian knights and never uttered a complaint. The cavaliers attained the opposite bank in safety, and were conducted by the renegado, by rude and unfrequented paths, and wild barrancos through the heart of the mountains, so as to avoid all the regular passes. In a word, they succeeded in reaching the ancient city of Cordova; when their restoration to their country and friends was celebrated with great rejoicings, for they were of the noblest families. The beautiful princesses were forthwith received into the bosom of the church, and after being in all due form made regular Christians, were rendered happy lovers.

In our hurry to make good the escape of the princesses across the river and up the mountains, we forgot to mention the fate of the discreet Cadiga. She had clung like a cat to Hussein Baba, in the scamper across the Vega, screaming at every bound and drawing many an oath from the whiskered renegado; but when he prepared to plunge his steed into the river her terror knew no bounds.

"Grasp me not so tightly," cried Hussein Baba; "hold on by my belt, and fear nothing."

She held firmly with both hands by the leathern belt that girded the broad-backed renegado; but when he halted with the cavaliers to take breath on the mountain summit, the duenna was no longer to be seen.

"What has become of Cadiga?" cried the princesses in alarm.

"I know not," replied the renegado. "My belt came loose in the midst of the river, and Cadiga was swept with it down the stream. The will of Allah be done!—but it was an embroidered belt and of great price!"

There was no time to waste in idle reports, yet bitterly did the princesses bewail the loss of their faithful and discreet counsellor. That excellent old woman, however, did not lose more than half of her nine lives in the stream.—A fisherman who was drawing his nets some distance down the stream, brought her to land and was not a little astonished at his miraculous draught. What farther became of the discreet Cadiga, the legend does not mention.—Certain it is, that she evinced her discretion in never venturing within the reach of Mohamed the left-handed.

Almost as little is known of the conduct of that sagacious monarch, when he discovered the escape of his daughters and the deceit practised upon him by the most faithful of servants. It was the only instance in which he had called in the aid of counsel, and he was never afterwards known to be guilty of a similar weakness. He took good care, however, to guard his remaining daughter; who had no disposition to elope. It is thought, indeed, that she secretly repented having remained behind. Now and then she was seen leaning on the battlements of the tower and looking mournfully towards the mountains, in the direction of Cordova; and sometimes the notes of her lute were heard accompanying plaintive ditties, in which she was said to lament the loss of her sisters and her lover, and to bewail her solitary life. She died young, and, according to

popular rumour, was buried in a vault beneath the tower, and her untimely fate has given rise to more than one traditional fable.

LOCAL TRADITIONS.

THE common people of Spain have an oriental passion for story-telling and are fond of the marvellous. They will gather round the doors of their cottages on summer evenings, or in the great cavernous chimney corners of their *ventas* in the winter, and listen with insatiable delight to miraculous legends of saints, perilous adventures of travellers, and daring exploits of robbers and contrabandistas. The wild and solitary nature of a great part of Spain; the imperfect state of knowledge; the scantiness of general topics of conversation, and the romantic, adventurous life that every one leads in a land where travelling is yet in its primitive state, all contribute to cherish this love of oral narration, and to produce a strong expression of the extravagant and wonderful. There is no theme, however, more prevalent or popular than that of treasures buried by the Moors. It pervades the whole country. In traversing the wild Sierras, the scenes of ancient prey and exploit, you cannot see a Moorish *atalaya* or watch-tower perched among the cliffs, or beetling above its rock-built village, but your muleteer, on being closely questioned, will suspend the smoking of his *cigarillo* to tell some tale of Moslem gold buried beneath its foundations; nor is there a ruined *alcazar* in a city, but has its golden tradition, handed down, from generation to generation, among the poor people of the neighbourhood.

These, like most popular fictions, have had some groundwork in fact. During the wars between Moor and Christian, which distracted the country for centuries, towns and castles were liable frequently and suddenly to change owners; and the inhabitants, during sieges and assaults, were fain to bury their money and jewels in the earth, or hide them in vaults and wells, as is often done at the present day in the despotic and belligerent countries of the East. At the time of the expulsion of the Moors, also, many of them concealed their most precious effects, hoping that their exile would be but temporary, and that they would be enabled to return and retrieve their treasures at some future day. It is certain that, from time to time, hoards of gold and silver coin have been accidentally dugged up, after a lapse of centuries, from among the ruins

of Moorish fortresses and habitations, and it requires but a few facts of the kind to give birth to a thousand fictions.

The stories thus originating have generally something of an oriental tinge, and are marked with that mixture of the Arabic and Gothic which seems to me to characterize everything in Spain; and especially in its southern provinces. The hidden wealth is always laid under magic spell, and secured by charm and talisman. Sometimes it is guarded by uncouth monsters, or fiery dragons; sometimes by enchanted Moors, who sit by it in armour, with drawn swords, but motionless as statues, maintaining a sleepless watch for ages.

The Alhambra, of course, from the peculiar circumstances of its history, is a strong hold for popular fictions of the kind, and curious reliques, dug up from time to time, have contributed to strengthen them. At one time, an earthen vessel was found, containing Moorish coins and the skeleton of a cock, which, according to the opinion of shrewd inspectors, must have been buried alive. At another time, a vessel was dugged up, containing a great scarabæus, or beetle, of baked clay, covered with Arabic inscriptions, which was pronounced a prodigious amulet of occult virtues. In this way the wits of the ragged brood who inhabit the Alhambra have been set wool gathering, until there is not a hall, or tower, or vault, of the old fortress that has not been made the scene of some marvellous tradition.

I have already given brief notices of some related to me by the authentic Mateo Ximenes, and now subjoin one wrought out from various particulars gathered among the gossips of the fortress.

LEGEND OF THE MOOR'S LEGACY.

JUST within the fortress of the Albambra, in front of the royal palace, is a broad open esplanade, called the place or square of the cisterns, (*la plaza de los algibes*,) so called from being undermined by reservoirs of water, hidden from sight, and which have existed from the time of the Moors. At one corner of this esplanade is a Moorish well, cut through the living rock to a great depth, the water of which is cold as ice and clear as crystal. The wells made by the Moors are always in

repute, for it is well known what pains they took to penetrate to the purest and sweetest springs and fountains. The one we are speaking of is famous throughout Granada, insomuch that the water-carriers, some bearing great water-jars on their shoulders, others driving asses before them, laden with earthen vessels, are ascending and descending the steep woody avenues of the Alhambra from early dawn until a late hour of the night.

Fountains and wells, ever since the scriptural days, have been noted gossiping places in hot climates, and at the well in question there is a kind of perpetual club kept up during the live-long day, by the invalids, old women, and other curious, do-nothing folk of the fortress, who sit here on the stone benches under an awning spread over the well to shelter the toll-gatherer from the sun, and dawdle over the gossip of the fortress, and question any water-carrier that arrives about the news of the city, and make long comments on everything they hear and see. Not an hour of the day but loitering housewives and idle maid-servants may be seen, lingering with pitcher on head or in hand, to hear the last of the endless tattle of these worthies.

Among the water-carriers who once resorted to this well there was a sturdy, strong-backed, bandy-legged little fellow, named Pedro Gil, but called Peregil for shortness. Being a water-carrier, he was a Gallego, or native of Galicia, of course. Nature seems to have formed races of men as she has of animals for different kinds of drudgery. In France the shoe-blacks are all Savoyards, the porters of hotels all Swiss, and in the days of hoops and hair powder in England, no man could give the regular swing to a sedan chair, but a bog-trotting Irishman. So in Spain the carriers of water and bearers of burdens are all sturdy little natives of Galicia. No man says, "get me a porter," but, "call a Gallego."

To return from this digression. Peregil the Gallego had begun business with merely a great earthen jar, which he carried upon his shoulder; by degrees he rose in the world, and was enabled to purchase an assistant of a correspondent class of animals, being a stout shaggy-haired donkey. On each side of this his long-eared aid-de-camp, in a kind of pannier, were slung his water-jars covered with fig leaves to protect them from the sun. There was not a more industrious water-carrier in all Granada, nor one more merry withal. The streets rang with his cheerful voice as he trudged after his donkey, singing forth the usual summer note that resounds through the Spanish towns:

"quien quiere agua—agua mas fria que la nieve.—Who wants water—water colder than snow—who wants water from the well of the Alhambra—cold as ice and clear as crystal?" When he served a customer with a sparkling glass, it was always with a pleasant word that caused a smile, and if, perchance, it was a comely dame, or dimpling damsel, it was always with a sly leer and a compliment to her beauty that was irresistible. Thus Peregil the Gallego was noted throughout all Granada for being one of the civilest, pleasantest, and happiest of mortals. Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart. Under all this air of merriment, honest Peregil had his cares and troubles. He had a large family of ragged children to support, who were hungry and clamorous as a nest of young swallows, and beset him with their outcries for food whenever he came home of an evening. He had a help-mate too, who was anything but a help to him. She had been a village beauty before marriage, noted for her skill in dancing the bolero and rattling the castanets, and she still retained her early propensities, spending the hard earnings of honest Peregil in frippery, and laying the very donkey under requisition for junketting parties into the country on Sundays, and saints' days, and those innumerable holydays which are rather more numerous in Spain than the days of the week. With all this she was a little of a slattern, something more of a lie-a-bed, and, above all, a gossip of the first water; neglecting house, household and everything else, to loiter slip-shod in the houses of her gossip neighbours.

He, however, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, accommodates the yoke of matrimony to the submissive neck. Peregil bore all the heavy dispensations of wife and children with as meek a spirit as his donkey bore the water-jars; and, however he might shake his ears in private, never ventured to question the household virtues of his slattern spouse.

He loved his children too, even as an owl loves its owlets, seeing in them his own image multiplied and perpetuated, for they were a sturdy, long-backed, bandy-legged little brood. The great pleasure of honest Peregil was, whenever he could afford himself a scanty holyday and had a handful of maravedies to spare, to take the whole litter forth with him, some in his arms, some tugging at his skirts, and some trudging at his heels, and to treat them to a gambol among the orchards of the Vega, while his wife was dancing with her holyday friends in the Angosturas of the Darro.

It was a late hour one summer night, and most of the water carriers had desisted from their toils. The day had been uncommonly sultry; the night was one of those delicious moonlights, which tempt the inhabitants of those southern climes to indemnify themselves for the heat and inaction of the day, by lingering in the open air and enjoying its tempered sweetness until after midnight. Customers for water were therefore still abroad. Peregil, like a considerate, painstaking little father, thought of his hungry children. "One more journey to the well," said he to himself, "to earn a good Sunday's puchero for the little ones." So saying, he trudged rapidly up the steep avenue of the Alhambra, singing as he went, and now and then bestowing a hearty thwack with a cudgel on the flanks of his donkey, either by way of cadence to the song, or refreshment to the animal; for dry blows serve in lieu for provender in Spain, for all beasts of burden.

When arrived at the well, he found it deserted by every one except a solitary stranger in Moorish garb, seated on the stone bench in the moonlight. Peregil paused at first, and regarded him with surprise, not unmixed with awe, but the Moor feebly beckoned him to approach.

"I am faint and ill," said he; "aid me to return to the city, and I will pay thee double what thou couldst gain by thy jars of water."

The honest heart of the little water-carrier was touched with compassion at the appeal of the stranger. "God forbid," said he, "that I should ask fee or reward for doing a common act of humanity."

He accordingly helped the Moor on his donkey, and set off slowly for Granada, the poor Moslem being so weak that it was necessary to hold him on the animal to keep him from falling to the earth.

When they entered the city, the water-carrier demanded whither he should conduct him. "Alas!" said the Moor, faintly, "I have neither home nor habitation. I am a stranger in the land. Suffer me to lay my head this night beneath thy roof, and thou shall be amply repaid."

Honest Peregil thus saw himself unexpectedly saddled with an infidel guest, but he was too humane to refuse a night's shelter to a fellow being in so forlorn a plight; so he conducted the Moor to his dwelling. The children, who had sallied forth, open-mouthed as usual, on hearing the tramp of the donkey, ran back with affright, when they beheld the turbaned

stranger, and hid themselves behind their mother. The latter stepped forth intrepidly, like a ruffling hen before her brood, when a vagrant dog approaches.

"What infidel companion," cried she, "is this you have brought home at this late hour, to draw upon us the eyes of the Inquisition?"

"Be quiet, wife," replied the Gallego, "here is a poor sick stranger, without friend or home: wouldst thou turn him forth to perish in the streets?"

The wife would still have remonstrated, for, though she lived in a hovel, she was a furious stickler for the credit of her house; the little water-carrier, however, for once was stiff-necked, and refused to bend beneath the yoke. He assisted the poor Moslem to alight, and spread a mat and a sheepskin for him, on the ground, in the coolest part of the house; being the only kind of bed that his poverty afforded.

In a little while the Moor was seized with violent convulsions, which defied all the ministering skill of the simple water-carrier. The eye of the poor patient acknowledged his kindness. During an interval of his fits he called him to his side, and addressing him in a low voice; "My end," said he, "I fear is at hand. If I die I bequeath you this box as a reward for your charity." So saying, he opened his albornoz, or cloak, and showed a small box of sandal wood, strapped round his body.

"God grant, my friend," replied the worthy little Gallego, "that you may live many years to enjoy your treasure, whatever it may be."

The Moor shook his head; he laid his hand upon the box, and would have said something more concerning it, but his convulsions returned with increased violence, and in a little while he expired.

The water-carrier's wife was now as one distracted. "This comes," said she, "of your foolish good nature, always running into scrapes to oblige others. What will become of us when this corpse is found in our house? We shall be sent to prison as murderers; and if we escape with our lives, shall be ruined by notaries and alguazils."

Poor Peregil was in equal tribulation, and almost repented himself of having done a good deed. At length a thought struck him. "It is not yet day," said he. "I can convey the dead body out of the city and bury it in the sands on the banks of the Xenil. No one saw the Moor enter our dwelling, and no

one will know any thing of his death." So said, so done. The wife aided him. they rolled the body of the unfortunate Moslem in the mat on which he had expired, laid it across the ass, and Mattias set out with it for the banks of the river.

As ill luck would have it, there lived opposite to the water-carrier a barber, named Pedrillo Pedrugo, one of the most prying, tattling, mischief-making, of his gossip tribe. He was a weasel-faced, spider-legged varlet, supple and insinuating; the famous Barber of Seville could not surpass him for his universal knowledge of the affairs of others, and he had no more power of retention than a sieve. It was said that he slept with but one eye at a time, and kept one ear uncovered, so that, even in his sleep, he might see and hear all that was going on. Certain it is, he was a sort of scandalous chronicle for the quidnuncs of Granada, and had more customers than all the rest of his fraternity.

This meddlesome barber heard Peregil arrive at an unusual hour of night, and the exclamations of his wife and children. His head was instantly popped out of a little window which served him as a lookout, and he saw his neighbour assist a man in a Moorish garb into his dwelling. This was so strange an occurrence that Pedrillo Pedrugo slept not a wink that night—every five minutes he was at his loop-hole, watching the lights that gleamed through the chinks of his neighbour's door, and before daylight he beheld Peregil sally forth with his donkey unusually laden.

The inquisitive barber was in a fidget; he slipped on his clothes, and, stealing forth silently, followed the water-carrier at a distance, until he saw him dig a hole in the sandy bank of the Xenil, and bury something that had the appearance of a dead body.

The barber hied him home and fidgeted about his shop, setting everything upside down, until sunrise. He then took a basin under his arm, and sallied forth to the house of his daily customer, the Alcalde.

The Alcalde was just risen. Pedrillo Pedrugo seated him in a chair, threw a napkin round his neck, put a basin of hot water under his chin, and began to mollify his beard with his fingers.

"Strange doings," said Pedrugo, who played barber and newsmonger at the same time. "Strange doings! Robbery, and murder, and burial, all in one night!"

"Hey? how! What is it you say?" cried the Alcalde.

"I say," replied the barber, rubbing a piece of soap over the nose and mouth of the dignitary, for a Spanish barber disdains to employ a brush; "I say that Peregil the Gallego has robbed and murdered a Moorish Mussulman, and buried him this blessed night,—*maldita sea la noche*,—accursed be the night for the same!"

"But how do you know all this?" demanded the Alcalde.

"Be patient, Señor, and you shall hear all about it," replied Pedrillo, taking him by the nose and sliding a razor over his cheek. He then recounted all that he had seen, going through both operations at the same time, shaving his beard, washing his chin, and wiping him dry with a dirty napkin, while he was robbing, murdering, and burying the Moslem.

Now it so happened that this Alcalde was one of the most overbearing, and at the same time most griping and corrupt curmudgeons in all Granada. It could not be denied, however, that he set a high value upon justice, for he sold it at its weight in gold. He presumed the case in point to be one of murder and robbery; doubtless there must be rich spoil; how was it to be secured into the legitimate hands of the law? for as to merely entrapping the delinquent—that would be feeding the gallows: but entrapping the booty—that would be enriching the judge; and such, according to his creed, was the great end of justice. So thinking, he summoned to his presence his trustiest alguazil; a gaunt, hungry-looking varlet, clad, according to the custom of his order, in the ancient Spanish garb—a broad black beaver, turned up at the sides; a quaint ruff, a small black cloak dangling from his shoulders; rusty black under-clothes that set off his spare wiry form; while in his hand he bore a slender white wand, the dreaded insignia of his office. Such was the legal bloodhound of the ancient Spanish breed, that he put upon the traces of the unlucky water-carrier; and such was his speed and certainty that he was upon the haunches of poor Peregil before he had returned to his dwelling, and brought both him and his donkey before the dispenser of justice.

The Alcalde bent upon him one of his most terrific frowns. "Hark ye, culprit," roared he in a voice that made the knees of the little Gallego smite together,— "Hark, ye culprit! there is no need of denying thy guilt: everything is known to me. A gallows is the proper reward for the crime thou hast committed, but I am merciful, and readily listen to reason. The man that has been murdered in thy house was a Moor, an infidel,

the enemy of our faith. It was doubtless in a fit of religious zeal that thou hast slain him. I will be indulgent, therefore; render up the property of which thou hast robbed him, and we will hush the matter up."

The poor water-carrier called upon all the saints to witness his innocence; alas! not one of them appeared, and if there had, the Alcalde would have disbelieved the whole kalendar. The water-carrier related the whole story of the dying Moor with the straightforward simplicity of truth, but it was all in vain: "Wilt thou persist in saying," demanded the judge, "that this Moslem had neither gold nor jewels, which were the object of thy cupidity?"

"As I hope to be saved, your worship," replied the water-carrier, "he had nothing but a small box of sandal wood, which he bequeathed to me in reward of my services."

"A box of sandal wood! a box of sandal wood!" exclaimed the Alcalde, his eyes sparkling at the idea of precious jewels, "and where is this box? where have you concealed it?"

"An' it please your grace," replied the water-carrier, "it is in one of the panniers of my mule, and heartily at the service of your worship."

He had hardly spoken the words when the keen alguazil darted off and reappeared in an instant with the mysterious box of sandal wood. The Alcalde opened it with an eager and trembling hand; all pressed forward to gaze upon the treasures it was expected to contain; when, to their disappointment, nothing appeared within but a parchment scroll, covered with Arabic characters, and an end of a waxen taper!

When there is nothing to be gained by the conviction of a prisoner, justice, even in Spain, is apt to be impartial. The Alcalde, having recovered from his disappointment and found there was really no booty in the case, now listened dispassionately to the explanation of the water-carrier, which was corroborated by the testimony of his wife. Being convinced, therefore, of his innocence, he discharged him from arrest; nay more, he permitted him to carry off the Moor's legacy, the box of sandal wood and its contents, as the well-merited reward of his humanity; but he retained his donkey in payment of cost and charges.

Behold the unfortunate little Gallego reduced once more to the necessity of being his own water-carrier, and trudging up to the well of the Alhambra with a great earthen jar upon his shoulder. As he toiled up the hill in the heat of a summer noon

his usual good-humour forsook him. "Dog of an Alcalde!" would he cry, "to rob a poor man of the means of his subsistence—of the best friend he had in the world!" And then, at the remembrance of the beloved companion of his labours, all the kindness of his nature would break forth. "Ah, donkey of my heart!" would he exclaim, resting his burden on a stone, and wiping the sweat from his brow, "Ah, donkey of my heart! I warrant me thou thinkest of thy old master! I warrant me thou missest the water jars—poor beast!"

To add to his afflictions his wife received him, on his return home, with whimperings and repinings; she had clearly the vantage-ground of him, having warned him not to commit the egregious act of hospitality that had brought on him all these misfortunes, and like a knowing woman, she took every occasion to throw her superior sagacity in his teeth. If ever her children lacked food, or needed a new garment, she would answer with a sneer, "Go to your father; he's heir to king Chico of the Alhambra. Ask him to help you out of the Moor's strong box."

Was ever poor mortal more soundly punished, for having done a good action! The unlucky Peregil was grieved in flesh and spirit, but still he bore meekly with the railings of his spouse. At length one evening, when, after a hot day's toil, she taunted him in the usual manner, he lost all patience. He did not venture to retort upon her, but his eye rested upon the box of sandal wood, which lay on a shelf with lid half open, as if laughing in mockery of his vexation. Seizing it up he dashed it with indignation on the floor. "Unlucky was the day that I ever set eyes on thee," he cried, "or sheltered thy master beneath my roof."

As the box struck the floor the lid flew wide open, and the parchment scroll rolled forth. Peregil sat regarding the scroll for some time in moody silence. At length rallying his ideas, "Who knows," thought he, "but this writing may be of some importance, as the Moor seems to have guarded it with such care." Picking it up, therefore, he put it in his bosom, and the next morning, as he was crying water through the streets, he stopped at the shop of a Moor, a native of Tangiers, who sold trinkets and perfumery in the Zacatin, and asked him to explain the contents.

The Moor read the scroll attentively, then stroked his beard and smiled. "This manuscript," said he, "is a form of incantation for the recovery of hidden treasure, that is under the

power of enchantment. It is said to have such virtue that the strongest bolts and bars, nay the adamantine rock itself will yield before it."

"Bah!" cried the little Gallego, "what is all that to me? I am no enchanter, and know nothing of buried treasure." So saying he shouldered his water-jar, left the scroll in the hands of the Moor, and trudged forward on his daily rounds.

That evening, however, as he rested himself about twilight at the well of the Alhambra, he found a number of gossips assembled at the place, and their conversation, as is not unusual at that shadowy hour, turned upon old tales and traditions of a supernatural nature. Being all poor as rats, they dwelt with peculiar fondness upon the popular theme of enchanted riches left by the Moors in various parts of the Alhambra. Above all, they concurred in the belief that there were great treasures buried deep in the earth under the tower of the Seven Floors.

These stories made an unusual impression on the mind of honest Peregil, and they sank deeper and deeper into his thoughts as he returned alone down the darkling avenues. "If, after all, there should be treasure hid beneath that tower—and if the scroll I left with the Moor should enable me to get at it!" In the sudden ecstasy of the thought he had well nigh let fall his water-jar.

That night he tumbled and tossed, and could scarcely get a wink of sleep for the thoughts that were bewildering his brain. In the morning, bright and early, he repaired to the shop of the Moor, and told him all that was passing in his mind. "You can read Arabic," said he, "suppose we go together to the tower and try the effect of the charm; if it fails we are no worse off than before, but if it succeeds we will share equally all the treasure we may discover."

"Hold," replied the Moslem, "this writing is not sufficient of itself; it must be read at midnight, by the light of a taper singularly compounded and prepared, the ingredients of which are not within my reach. Without such taper the scroll is of no avail."

"Say no more!" cried the little Gallego. "I have such a taper at hand and will bring it here in a moment." So saying he hastened home, and soon returned with the end of a yellow wax taper that he had found in the box of sandal wood.

The Moor felt it, and smelt to it. "Here are rare and costly perfumes," said he, "combined with this yellow wax. This is the kind of taper specified in the scroll. While this burns, the

strongest walls and most secret caverns will remain open; woe to him, however, who lingers within until it be extinguished. He will remain enchanted with the treasure."

It was now agreed between them to try the charm that very night. At a late hour, therefore, when nothing was stirring but bats and owls, they ascended the woody hill of the Alhambra, and approached that awful tower, shrouded by trees and rendered formidable by so many traditionary tales.

By the light of a lantern, they groped their way through bushes, and over fallen stones, to the door of a vault beneath the tower. With fear and trembling they descended a flight of steps cut into the rock. It led to an empty chamber, damp and drear, from which another flight of steps led to a deeper vault. In this way they descended four several flights, leading into as many vaults, one below the other, but the floor of the fourth was solid, and though, according to tradition, there remained three vaults still below, it was said to be impossible to penetrate farther, the residue being shut up by strong enchantment. The air of this vault was damp and chilly, and had an earthy smell, and the light scarce cast forth any rays. They paused here for a time in breathless suspense, until they faintly heard the clock of the watch tower strike midnight; upon this they lit the waxen taper, which diffused an odour of myrrh, and frankincense, and storax.

The Moor began to read in a hurried voice. He had scarce finished, when there was a noise as of subterraneous thunder. The earth shook, and the floor yawning open disclosed a flight of steps. Trembling with awe they descended, and by the light of the lantern found themselves in another vault, covered with Arabic inscriptions. In the centre stood a great chest, secured with seven bands of steel, at each end of which sat an enchanted Moor in armour, but motionless as a statue, being controlled by the power of the incantation. Before the chest were several jars filled with gold and silver and precious stones. In the largest of these they thrust their arms up to the elbow, and at every dip hauled forth hands-full of broad yellow pieces of Moorish gold, or bracelets and ornaments of the same precious metal, while occasionally a necklace of oriental pearl would stick to their fingers. Still they trembled and breathed short while cramming their pockets with the spoils; and cast many a fearful glance at the two enchanted Moors, who sat grim and motionless, glaring upon them with unwinking eyes. At length, struck with a sudden panic at

some fancied noise, they both rushed up the staircase, tumbled over one another into the upper apartment, overturned and extinguished the waxen taper, and the pavement again closed with a thundering sound.

Filled with dismay, they did not pause until they had groped their way out of the tower, and beheld the stars shining through the trees. Then seating themselves upon the grass, they divided the spoil, determining to content themselves for the present with this mere skimming of the jars, but to return on some future night and drain them to the bottom. To make sure of each other's good faith, also, they divided the talismans between them, one retaining the scroll and the other the taper; this done, they set off with light hearts and well lined pockets for Granada.

As they wended their way down the hill, the shrewd Moor whispered a word of counsel in the ear of the simple little water-carrier.

"Friend Peregil," said he, "all this affair must be kept a profound secret until we have secured the treasure and conveyed it out of harm's way. If a whisper of it gets to the ear of the Alcalde we are undone!"

"Certainly!" replied the Gallego; "nothing can be more true."

"Friend Peregil," said the Moor, "you are a discreet man, and I make no doubt can keep a secret; but—you have a wife—"

"She shall not know a word of it!" replied the little water-carrier sturdily.

"Enough," said the Moor, "I depend upon thy discretion and thy promise."

Never was promise more positive and sincere; but alas! what man can keep a secret from his wife? Certainly not such a one as Peregil the water-carrier, who was one of the most loving and tractable of husbands. On his return home he found his wife moping in a corner.

"Mighty well!" cried she, as he entered; "you've come at last; after rambling about until this hour of the night. I wonder you have not brought home another Moor as a house-mate." Then bursting into tears she began to wring her hands and smite her breast. "Unhappy woman that I am!" exclaimed she, "what will become of me! My house stripped and plundered by lawyers and alguazils; my husband a do-no-good that no longer brings home bread for his family, but

goes rambling about, day and night, with infidel Moors. Oh, my children! my children! what will become of us; we shall all have to beg in the streets!"

Honest Peregil was so moved by the distress of his spouse, that he could not help whimpering also. His heart was as full as his pocket, and not to be restrained. Thrusting his hand into the latter he hauled forth three or four broad gold pieces and slipped them into her bosom. The poor woman stared with astonishment, and could not understand the meaning of this golden shower. Before she could recover her surprise, the little Gallego drew forth a chain of gold and dangled it before her, capering with exultation, his mouth distended from ear to ear.

"Holy Virgin protect us!" exclaimed the wife. "What hast thou been doing, Peregil? Surely thou hast not been committing murder and robbery!"

The idea scarce entered the brain of the poor woman than it became a certainty with her. She saw a prison and a gallows in the distance, and a little bandy-legged Gallego dangling pendant from it; and, overcome by the horrors conjured up by her imagination, fell into violent hysterics.

What could the poor man do? He had no other means of pacifying his wife and dispelling the phantoms of her fancy, than by relating the whole story of his good fortune. This, however, he did not do until he had exacted from her the most solemn promise to keep it a profound secret from every living being.

To describe her joy would be impossible. She flung her arms round the neck of her husband, and almost strangled him with her caresses. "Now, wife!" exclaimed the little man with honest exultation, "what say you now to the Moor's legacy? Henceforth never abuse me for helping a fellow creature in distress."

The honest Gallego retired to his sheepskin mat, and slept as soundly as if on a bed of down. Not so his wife.—She emptied the whole contents of his pockets upon the mat, and sat all night counting gold pieces of Arabic coin, trying on necklaces and ear-rings, and fancying the figure she should one day make when permitted to enjoy her riches.

On the following morning the honest Gallego took a broad golden coin, and repaired with it to a jeweller's shop in the Zacatin to offer it for sale; pretending to have found it among the ruins of the Alhambra. The jeweller saw that it had an

Arabic inscription and was of the purest gold; he offered, however, but a third of its value, with which the water-carrier was perfectly content. Peregil now bought new clothes for his little flock, and all kinds of toys, together with ample provisions for a hearty meal, and returning to his dwelling set all his children dancing around him, while he capered in the midst, the happiest of fathers.

The wife of the water-carrier kept her promise of secrecy with surprising strictness. For a whole day and a half she went about with a look of mystery and a heart swelling almost to bursting, yet she held her peace, though surrounded by her gossips. It is true she could not help giving herself a few airs, apologized for her ragged dress, and talked of ordering a new basquina all trimmed with gold lace and bugles, and a new lace mantilla. She threw out hints of her husband's intention of leaving off his trade of water-carrying, as it did not altogether agree with his health. In fact she thought they should all retire to the country for the summer, that the children might have the benefit of the mountain air, for there was no living in the city in this sultry season.

The neighbours stared at each other, and thought the poor woman had lost her wits, and her airs and graces and elegant pretensions were the theme of universal scoffing and merriment among her friends, the moment her back was turned.

If she restrained herself abroad, however, she indemnified herself at home, and, putting a string of rich oriental pearls round her neck, Moorish bracelets on her arms; an aigrette of diamonds on her head, sailed backwards and forwards in her slattern rags about the room, now and then stopping to admire herself in a piece of broken mirror. Nay, in the impulse of her simple vanity, she could not resist on one occasion showing herself at the window, to enjoy the effect of her finery on the passers by.

As the fates would have it, Pedrillo Pedrugo, the meddling barber, was at this moment sitting idly in his shop on the opposite side of the street, when his ever watchful eye caught the sparkle of a diamond. In an instant he was at his loop-hole, reconnoitring the slattern spouse of the water-carrier, decorated with the splendour of an eastern bride. No sooner had he taken an accurate inventory of her ornaments than he posted off with all speed to the Alcalde. In a little while the hungry alguazil was again on the scent, and before

the day was over, the unfortunate Peregil was again dragged into the presence of the judge.

"How is this, villain!" cried the Alcalde in a furious voice. "You told me that the infidel who died in your house left nothing behind but an empty coffer, and now I hear of your wife flaunting in her rags decked out with pearls and diamonds. Wretch, that thou art! prepare to render up the spoils of thy miserable victim, and to swing on the gallows that is already tired of waiting for thee."

The terrified water-carrier fell on his knees, and made a full relation of the marvellous manner in which he had gained his wealth. The Alcalde, the alguazil, and the inquisitive barber listened with greedy ears to this Arabian tale of enchanted treasure. The alguazil was despatched to bring the Moor who had assisted in the incantation. The Moslem entered half frightened out of his wits at finding himself in the hands of the harpies of the law. When he beheld the water-carrier standing with sheepish look and downcast countenance, he comprehended the whole matter. "Miserable animal," said he, as he passed near him, "did I not warn thee against babbling to thy wife?"

The story of the Moor coincided exactly with that of his colleague; but the Alcalde affected to be slow of belief, and threw out menaces of imprisonment and rigorous investigation.

"Softly, good Señor Alcalde," said the Mussulman, who by this time had recovered his usual shrewdness and self-possession. "Let us not mar fortune's favours in the scramble for them. Nobody knows any thing of this matter but ourselves; let us keep the secret. There is wealth enough in the cave to enrich us all. Promise a fair division, and all shall be produced; refuse, and the cave shall remain for ever closed."

The Alcalde consulted apart with the alguazil. The latter was an old fox in his profession. "Promise any thing," said he, "until you get possession of the treasure. You may then seize upon the whole, and if he and his accomplice dare to murmur, threaten them with the faggot and the stake as infidels and sorcerers."

The Alcalde relished the advice. Smoothing his brow and turning to the Moor,—"This is a strange story," said he, "and may be true, but I must have ocular proof of it. This very night you must repeat the incantation in my presence. If there be really such treasure, we will share it amicably between us, and say nothing further of the matter; if ye have deceived

me, expect no mercy at my hands. In the mean time you must remain in custody."

The Moor and the water-carrier cheerfully agreed to these conditions; satisfied that the event would prove the truth of their words.

Towards midnight the Alcalde sallied forth secretly, attended by the alguazil and the meddlesome barber, all strongly armed. They conducted the Moor and the water-carrier as prisoners, and were provided with the stout donkey of the latter, to bear off the expected treasure. They arrived at the tower without being observed, and tying the donkey to a fig-tree, descended into the fourth vault of the tower.

The scroll was produced, the yellow waxen taper lighted, and the Moor read the form of incantation. The earth trembled as before, and the pavement opened with a thundering sound, disclosing the narrow flight of steps. The Alcalde, the alguazil, and the barber were struck aghast, and could not summon courage to descend. The Moor and the water-carrier entered the lower vault and found the two Moors seated as before, silent and motionless. They removed two of the great jars, filled with golden coin and precious stones. The water-carrier bore them up one by one upon his shoulders, but though a strong-backed little man, and accustomed to carry burdens, he staggered beneath their weight, and found, when slung on each side of his donkey, they were as much as the animal could bear.

"Let us be content for the present," said the Moor; "here is as much treasure as we can carry off without being perceived, and enough to make us all wealthy to our heart's desire."

"Is there more treasure remaining behind?" demanded the Alcalde.

"The greatest prize of all," said the Moor; "a huge coffer, bound with bands of steel, and filled with pearls and precious stones."

"Let us have up the coffer by all means," cried the grasping Alcalde.

"I will descend for no more," said the Moor, doggedly. "Enough is enough for a reasonable man; more is superfluous."

"And I," said the water-carrier, "will bring up no further burthen to break the back of my poor donkey."

Finding commands, threats, and entreaties equally vain, the Alcalde turned to his two adherents. "Aid me," said he, "to bring up the coffer, and its contents shall be divided between

us." So saying he descended the steps, followed, with trembling reluctance, by the alguazil and the barber.

No sooner did the Moor behold them fairly earthed than he extinguished the yellow taper: the pavement closed with its usual crash, and the three worthies remained buried in its womb.

He then hastened up the different flights of steps, nor stopped until in the open air. The little water-carrier followed him as fast as his short legs would permit.

"What hast thou done?" cried Peregil, as soon as he could recover breath. "The Alcalde and the other two are shut up in the vault!"

"It is the will of Allah!" said the Moor, devoutly.

"And will you not release them?" demanded the Gallego.

"Allah forbid!" replied the Moor, smoothing his beard. "It is written in the book of fate that they shall remain enchanted until some future adventurer shall come to break the charm. The will of God be done!" So saying he hurled the end of the waxen taper far among the gloomy thickets of the glen.

There was now no remedy; so the Moor and the water-carrier proceeded with the richly-laden donkey towards the city: nor could honest Peregil refrain from hugging and kissing his long-eared fellow-labourer, thus restored to him from the clutches of the law; and, in fact, it is doubtful which gave the simple-hearted little man most joy at the moment, the gaining of the treasure or the recovery of the donkey.

The two partners in good luck divided their spoil amicably and fairly, excepting that the Moor, who had a little taste for trinketry, made out to get into his heap the most of the pearls and precious stones, and other baubles, but then he always gave the water-carrier in lieu magnificent jewels of massy gold four times the size, with which the latter was heartily content. They took care not to linger within reach of accidents, but made off to enjoy their wealth undisturbed in other countries. The Moor returned into Africa, to his native city of Tetuan, and the Gallego, with his wife, his children and his donkey, made the best of his way to Portugal. Here, under the admonition and tuition of his wife, he became a personage of some consequence, for she made the little man array his long body and short legs in doublet and hose, with a feather in his hat and a sword by his side; and, laying aside the familiar appellation of Peregil, assume the more sonorous title of Don Pedro Gil. His progeny grew up a thriving and merry-hearted,

though short and bandy-legged generation; while the Senora Gil, be-fringed, be-laced, and be-tasselled from her head to her heels, with glittering rings on every finger, became a model of slattern fashion and finery.

As to the Alcalde, and his adjuncts, they remained shut up under the great tower of the Seven Floors, and there they remain spell-bound at the present day. Whenever there shall be a lack in Spain of pimping barbers, sharking alguazils, and corrupt Alcaldes, they may be sought after; but if they have to wait until such time for their deliverance, there is danger of their enchantment enduring until doomsday.

VISITORS TO THE ALHAMBRA.

It is now nearly three months since I took up my abode in the Alhambra, during which time the progress of the season has wrought many changes. When I first arrived every thing was in the freshness of May; the foliage of the trees was still tender and transparent; the pomegranate had not yet shed its brilliant crimson blossoms; the orchards of the Xenil and the Darro were in full bloom; the rocks were hung with wild flowers, and Granada seemed completely surrounded by a wilderness of roses, among which innumerable nightingales sang, not merely in the night, but all day long.

The advance of summer has withered the rose and silenced the nightingale, and the distant country begins to look parched and sunburnt; though a perennial verdure reigns immediately round the city, and in the deep narrow valleys at the foot of the snow-capped mountains.

The Alhambra possesses retreats graduated to the heat of the weather, among which the most peculiar is the almost subterranean apartment of the baths. This still retains its ancient oriental character, though stamped with the touching traces of decline. At the entrance, opening into a small court formerly adorned with flowers, is a hall, moderate in size, but light and graceful in architecture. It is overlooked by a small gallery supported by marble pillars and moresco arches. An alabaster fountain in the centre of the pavement still throws up a jet of water to cool the place. On each side are deep alcoves with raised platforms, where the bathers after their ablutions

reclined on luxurious cushions, soothed to voluptuous repose by the fragrance of the perfumed air and the notes of soft music from the gallery. Beyond this hall are the interior chambers, still more private and retired, where no light is admitted but through small apertures in the vaulted ceilings. Here was the *sanctum sanctorum* of female privacy, where the beauties of the harem indulged in the luxury of the baths. A soft mysterious light reigns through the place, the broken baths are still there, and traces of ancient elegance.

The prevailing silence and obscurity have made this a favourite resort of bats, who nestle during the day in the dark nooks and corners, and, on being disturbed, flit mysteriously about the twilight chambers, heightening in an indescribable degree their air of desertion and decay.

In this cool and elegant though dilapidated retreat, which has the freshness and seclusion of a grotto, I have of late passed the sultry hours of the day; emerging toward sunset, and bathing, or rather swimming, at night in the great reservoir of the main court. In this way I have been enabled in a measure to counteract the relaxing and enervating influence of the climate.

My dream of absolute sovereignty, however, is at an end: I was roused from it lately by the report of fire-arms, which reverberated among the towers as if the castle had been taken by surprise. On sallying forth I found an old cavalier with a number of domestics in possession of the hall of ambassadors. He was an ancient Count, who had come up from his palace in Granada to pass a short time in the Alhambra for the benefit of purer air, and who, being a veteran and inveterate sportsman, was endeavouring to get an appetite for his breakfast by shooting at swallows from the balconies. It was a harmless amusement, for though, by the alertness of his attendants in loading his pieces, he was enabled to keep up a brisk fire, I could not accuse him of the death of a single swallow. Nay, the birds themselves seemed to enjoy the sport, and to deride his want of skill, skimming in circles close to the balconies, and twittering as they darted by.

The arrival of this old gentleman has in some measure changed the aspect of affairs, but has likewise afforded matter for agreeable speculation. We have tacitly shared the empire between us, like the last kings of Granada, excepting that we maintain a most amicable alliance. He reigns absolute over the Court of the Lions and its adjacent halls, while I maintain

peaceful possession of the region of the baths and the little garden of Lindaraxa. We take our meals together under the arcades of the court, where the fountains cool the air, and bubbling rills run along the channels of the marble pavement.

In the evening, a domestic circle gathers about the worthy old cavalier. The countess comes up from the city, with a favourite daughter about sixteen years of age. Then there are the official dependents of the Count, his chaplain, his lawyer, his secretary, his steward, and others officers and agents of his extensive possessions. Thus he holds a kind of domestic court, where every person seeks to contribute to his amusement, without sacrificing his own pleasure or self-respect. In fact, whatever may be said of Spanish pride, it certainly does not enter into social or domestic life. Among no people are the relations between kindred more cordial, or between superior and dependent more frank and genial; in these respects there still remains, in the provincial life of Spain, much of the vaunted simplicity of the olden times.

The most interesting member of this family group, however, is the daughter of the Count, the charming though almost infantile little Carmen. Her form has not yet attained its maturity, but has already the exquisite symmetry and pliant grace so prevalent in this country. Her blue eyes, fair complexion, and light hair are unusual in Andalusia, and give a mildness and gentleness to her demeanour, in contrast to the usual fire of Spanish beauty, but in perfect unison with the guileless and confiding innocence of her manners. She has, however, all the innate aptness and versatility of her fascinating countrywomen, and sings, dances, and plays the guitar and other instruments to admiration. A few days after taking up his residence in the Alhambra, the Count gave a domestic fête on his saint's day, assembling round him the members of his family and household, while several old servants came from his distant possessions to pay their reverence to him, and partake of the good cheer.

This patriarchal spirit which characterized the Spanish nobility in the days of their opulence has declined with their fortunes; but some who, like the Count, still retain their ancient family possessions, keep up a little of the ancient system, and have their estates overrun and, almost eaten up by generations of idle retainers. According to this magnificent old Spanish system, in which the national pride and generosity bore equal parts, a superannuated servant was never turned

off, but became a charge for the rest of his days; nay, his children, and his children's children, and often their relations, to the right and left, became gradually entailed upon the family. Hence the huge palaces of the Spanish nobility, which have such an air of empty ostentation from the greatness of their size compared with the mediocrity and scantiness of their furniture, were absolutely required in the golden days of Spain by the patriarchal habits of their possessors. They were little better than vast barracks for the hereditary generations of hangers-on that battened at the expense of a Spanish noble. The worthy Count, who has estates in various parts of the kingdom, assures me that some of them barely feed the hordes of dependents nestled upon them; who consider themselves entitled to be maintained upon the place, rent free, because their forefathers have been so for generations.

The domestic fête of the Count broke in upon the usual still life of the Alhambra. Music and laughter resounded through its late silent halls; there were groups of the guests amusing themselves about the galleries and gardens, and officious servants from town hurrying through the courts, bearing viands to the ancient kitchen, which was again alive with the tread of cooks and scullions, and blazed with unwonted fires.

The feast, for a Spanish set dinner is literally a feast, was laid in the beautiful moresco hall called "*la sala de las dos Hermanas*," (the saloon of the two sisters;) the table groaned with abundance, and a joyous conviviality prevailed round the board; for though the Spaniards are generally an abstemious people, they are complete revellers at a banquet.

For my own part, there was something peculiarly interesting in thus sitting at a feast, in the royal halls of the Alhambra, given by the representative of one of its most renowned conquerors; for the venerable Count, though unwarlike himself, is the lineal descendant and representative of the "*Great Captain*," the illustrious Gonsalvo of Cordova, whose sword he guards in the archives of his palace at Granada.

The banquet ended, the company adjourned to the hall of ambassadors. Here every one contributed to the general amusement by exerting some peculiar talent; singing, improvising, telling wonderful tales, or dancing to that all-pervading talisman of Spanish pleasure, the guitar.

The life and charm of the whole assemblage, however, was the gifted little Carmen. She took her part in two or three scenes from Spanish comedies, exhibiting a charming dra-

matic talent; she gave imitations of the popular Italian singers, with singular and whimsical felicity, and a rare quality of voice; she imitated the dialects, dances and ballads of the gipsies and the neighbouring peasantry, but did every thing with a facility, a neatness, a grace, and an all-pervading prettiness, that were perfectly fascinating. The great charm of her performances, however, was their being free from all pretension or ambition or display. She seemed unconscious of the extent of her own talents, and in fact is accustomed only to exert them casually, like a child, for the amusement of the domestic circle. Her observation and tact must be remarkably quick, for her life is passed in the bosom of her family, and she can only have had casual and transient glances at the various characters and traits, brought out *impromptu* in moments of domestic hilarity, like the one in question. It is pleasing to see the fondness and admiration with which every one of the household regards her: she is never spoken of, even by the domestics, by any other appellation than that of La Niña, "the child," an appellation which thus applied has something peculiarly kind and endearing in the Spanish language.

Never shall I think of the Alhambra without remembering the lovely little Carmen sporting in happy and innocent girlhood in its marble halls; dancing to the sound of the Moorish castanets, or mingling the silver warbling of her voice with the music of the fountains.

On this festive occasion several curious and amusing legends and traditions were told; many of which have escaped my memory; but of those that most struck me, I will endeavour to shape forth some entertainment for the reader.

LEGEND OF PRINCE AHMED AL KAMEL;

OR,

THE PILGRIM OF LOVE.

THERE was once a Moorish King of Granada who had but one son, whom he named Ahmed, to which his courtiers added the surname of al Kamel, or the perfect, from the indubitable signs of super-excellence which they perceived in him in his very infancy. The astrologers countenanced them in their

foresight, predicting every thing in his favour that could make a perfect prince and a prosperous sovereign. One cloud only rested upon his destiny, and even that was of a roseate hue. He would be of an amorous temperament, and run great perils from the tender passion. If, however, he could be kept from the allurements of love until of mature age, these dangers would be averted, and his life thereafter be one uninterrupted course of felicity.

To prevent all danger of the kind, the king wisely determined to rear the prince in a seclusion, where he should never see a female face nor hear even the name of love. For this purpose he built a beautiful palace on the brow of a hill above the Alhambra, in the midst of delightful gardens, but surrounded by lofty walls; being, in fact, the same palace known at the present day by the name of the Generaliffe. In this palace the youthful prince was shut up and entrusted to the guardianship and instruction of Ebon Bonabbon, one of the wisest and dryest of Arabian sages, who had passed the greatest part of his life in Egypt, studying hieroglyphics and making researches among the tombs and pyramids, and who saw more charms in an Egyptian mummy than in the most tempting of living beauties. The sage was ordered to instruct the prince in all kinds of knowledge but one—he is to be kept utterly ignorant of love—"use every precaution for the purpose you may think proper," said the king, "but remember, oh Ebon Bonabbon, if my son learns aught of that forbidden knowledge, while under your care, your head shall answer for it." A withered smile came over the dry visage of the wise Bonabbon at the menace. "Let your majesty's heart be as easy about your son as mine is about my head. Am I a man likely to give lessons in the idle passion?"

Under the vigilant care of the philosopher, the prince grew up in the seclusion of the palace and its gardens. He had black slaves to attend upon him—hideous mutes, who knew nothing of love, or if they did, had not words to communicate it. His mental endowments were the peculiar care of Ebon Bonabbon, who sought to initiate him into the abstruse lore of Egypt, but in this the prince made little progress, and it was soon evident that he had no turn for philosophy.

He was, however, amazingly ductile for a youthful prince; ready to follow any advice and always guided by the last councillor. He suppressed his yawns, and listened patiently to the long and learned discourses of Ebon Bonabbon, from which he

imbibed a smattering of various kinds of knowledge, and thus happily attained his twentieth year, a miracle of princely wisdom, but totally ignorant of love.

About this time, however, a change came over the conduct of the prince. He completely abandoned his studies and took to strolling about the gardens and musing by the side of the fountains. He had been taught a little music among his various accomplishments; it now engrossed a great part of his time, and a turn for poetry became apparent. The sage Ebon Bonabbon took the alarm, and endeavoured to work these idle humours out of him by a severe course of algebra; but the prince turned from it with distaste. "I cannot endure algebra," said he; "it is an abomination to me. I want something that speaks more to the heart."

The sage Ebon Bonabbon shook his dry head at the words. "Here's an end to philosophy," thought he. "The prince has discovered he has a heart!" He now kept anxious watch upon his pupil, and saw that the latent tenderness of his nature was in activity, and only wanted an object. He wandered about the gardens of the Generaliffe in an intoxication of feelings of which he knew not the cause. Sometimes he would sit plunged in a delicious reverie; then he would seize his lute and draw from it the most touching notes, and then throw it aside, and break forth into sighs and ejaculations.

By degrees this loving disposition began to extend to inanimate objects; he had his favourite flowers which he cherished with tender; assiduity then he became attached to various trees, and there was one in particular, of a graceful form and drooping foliage, on which he lavished his amorous devotion, carving his name on its bark, hanging garlands on its branches, and singing couplets in its praise, to the accompaniment of his lute.

The sage Ebon Bonabbon was alarmed at this excited state of his pupil. He saw him on the very brink of forbidden knowledge—the least hint might reveal to him the fatal secret. Trembling for the safety of the prince, and the security of his own head, he hastened to draw him from the seductions of the garden, and shut him up in the highest tower of the Generaliffe. It contained beautiful apartments, and commanded an almost boundless prospect, but was elevated far above that atmosphere of sweets and those witching bowers so dangerous to the feelings of the too susceptible Ahmed.

What was to be done, however, to reconcile him to this restraint and to beguile the tedious hours? He had exhausted almost all kinds of agreeable knowledge; and algebra was not to be mentioned. Fortunately Ebon Bonabbon had been instructed, when in Egypt, in the language of birds, by a Jewish Rabbin, who had received it in lineal transmission from Solomon the wise, who had been taught it by the Queen of Sheba. At the very mention of such a study the eyes of the prince sparkled with animation, and he applied himself to it with such avidity, that he soon became as great an adept as his master.

The tower of the Generaliffe was no longer a solitude; he had companions at hand with whom he could converse. The first acquaintance he formed was with a hawk who had built his nest in a crevice of the lofty battlements, from whence he soared far and wide in quest of prey. The prince, however, found little to like or esteem in him. He was a mere pirate of the air, swaggering and boastful, whose talk was all about rapine, and carnage, and desperate exploits.

His next acquaintance was an owl, a mighty wise-looking bird, with a large head and staring eyes, who sat blinking and goggling all day in a hole in the wall, but roamed forth at night. He had great pretensions to wisdom; talked something of astrology and the moon, and hinted at the dark sciences, but he was grievously given to metaphysics, and the prince found his prosings were more ponderous than those of the sage Ebon Bonabbon.

Then there was a bat, that hung all day by his heels in the dark corner of a vault, but sallied out in a slipshod style at twilight. He, however, had but twilight ideas on all subjects, derided things of which he had taken but an imperfect view, and seemed to take delight in nothing.

Beside these there was a swallow, with whom the prince was at first much taken. He was a smart talker, but restless, bustling, and for ever on the wing; seldom remaining long enough for any continued conversation. He turned out in the end to be a mere smatterer, who did but skim over the surface of things, pretending to know every thing, but knowing nothing thoroughly.

These were the only feathered associates with whom the prince had any opportunity of exercising his newly acquired language; the tower was too high for any other birds to frequent it. He soon grew weary of his new acquaintances

whose conversation spake so little to the head and nothing to the heart; and gradually relapsed into his loneliness. A winter passed away, spring opened with all its bloom, and verdure, and breathing sweetness, and the happy time arrived for birds to pair and build their nests. Suddenly, as it were, a universal burst of song and melody broke forth from the groves and gardens of the Generalife, and reached the prince in the solitude of his tower. From every side he heard the same universal theme—love—love—love—chaunted forth and responded to in every variety of note and tone. The prince listened in silence and perplexity. "What can be this love," thought he, "of which the world seems so full, and of which I know nothing?" He applied for information to his friend the hawk. The ruffian bird answered in a tone of scorn,—“You must apply,” said he, “to the vulgar, peaceable birds of earth, who are made for the prey of us princes of the air. My trade is war, and fighting my delight. In a word, I am a warrior, and know nothing of this thing called love.”

The prince turned from him with disgust, and sought the owl in his retreat. “This is a bird,” said he, “of peaceful habits, and may be able to solve my question.” So he asked the owl to tell him what was this love about which all the birds in the groves below were singing.

Upon this the owl put on a look of offended dignity. “My nights,” said he, “are taken up in study and research, and my days in ruminating in myself upon all that I have learnt. As to these singing birds of whom you talk, I never listen to them. I despise them and their themes. Allah be praised, I cannot sing. In a word, I am a philosopher, and know nothing of this thing called love.”

The prince now repaired to the vault where his friend the bat was hanging by the heels, and propounded the same question. The bat wrinkled up his nose into a most snappish expression. “Why do you disturb me in my morning’s nap with such an idle question,” said he peevishly. “I only fly by twilight when all birds are asleep, and never trouble myself with their concerns. I am neither bird nor beast, and I thank heaven for it. I have found out the villainy of the whole of them, and hate them, one and all. In a word, I am a misanthrope, and know nothing of this thing called love.”

As a last resort, the prince was now sought the swallow, and stopped him just as he was circling about the summit of the tower. The swallow as usual was in a prodigious hurry, and

had scarce time to make a reply. "Upon my word," said he, "I have so much public business to attend to, and so many pursuits to follow, that I have had no time to think on the subject. I have every day a thousand visits to pay; a thousand affairs of importance to examine into, that leave me not a moment of leisure for these little sing-song matters. In a word, I am a citizen of the world. I know nothing of this thing called love." So saying, the swallow dived into the valley and was out of sight in a moment.

The prince remained disappointed and perplexed, but with his curiosity still more piqued by the difficulty of gratifying it. While in this mood his ancient guardian entered the tower. The prince advanced eagerly to meet him. "Oh sage Ebon Bonabbon," cried he, "thou hast revealed to me much of the wisdom of the earth, but there is one thing of which I remain in utter ignorance, and would fain be informed."

"My prince has but to make the inquiry, and every thing within the limited range of his servant's intellect is at his command."

"Tell me then, oh most profound of sages, what is the nature of this thing called love?"

The sage Ebon Bonabbon was struck as with a thunderbolt. He trembled and turned pale, and felt as if his head sat but loosely on his shoulders.

"What could suggest such a question to my prince?—where could he have learnt so idle a word?"

The prince led him to the window of the tower. "Listen, oh Ebon Bonabbon!" said he. The sage listened. The nightingale sat in a thicket below the tower singing to his paramour, the rose; from every blossomed spray and tufted grove arose a strain of melody, and love—love—love, was still the unvarying theme. "Allah Achbar! God is great!" exclaimed the wise Bonabbon. "Who shall pretend to keep this secret from the hearts of men when even the birds of the air conspire to betray it?"

Then turning to Ahmed, "Oh my prince," cried he, "shut thine ears to these seductive strains. Close thy mind against this dangerous knowledge. Know that this love is the cause of half the ills of wretched mortality. It is this which produces bitterness of strife between brethren and friends; which causes treacherous murder and desolating war. Care and sorrow, weary days and sleepless nights, are its attendants. It withers the bloom and blights the joys of youth, and brings

on the ills and griefs of premature old age. "Allah preserve thee, my prince, in total ignorance of this thing called love!"

The sage Ebon Bonabbon hastily retired, leaving the prince plunged in still deeper perplexity. It was in vain he attempted to dismiss the subject from his mind; it still continued uppermost in his thoughts, and teased and exhausted him with vain conjectures. "Surely," said he to himself as he listened to the tuneful strains of the birds, "there is no sorrow in these notes: every thing seems tenderness and joy. If love be a cause of such wretchedness and strife, why are not those birds drooping in solitude, or tearing each other in pieces, instead of fluttering cheerfully about the groves, or sporting with each other among the flowers?"

He lay one morning on his couch meditating on this inexplicable matter. The window of his chamber was open to admit the soft morning breeze which came laden with the perfume of orange blossoms from the valley of the Darro. The voice of the nightingale was faintly heard, still chanting the wonted theme. As the prince was listening and sighing, there was a sudden rushing noise in the air; a beautiful dove, pursued by a hawk, darted in at the window and fell panting on the floor; while the pursuer, balked of his prey, soared off to the mountains.

The prince took up the gasping bird, smoothed its feathers, and nestled it in his bosom. When he had soothed it by his caresses he put it in a golden cage, and offered it, with his own hands, the whitest and finest of wheat and the purest of water. The bird, however, refused food, and sat drooping and pining, and uttering piteous moans.

"What aileth thee?" said Ahmed. "Hast thou not every thing thy heart can wish?"

"Alas, no!" replied the dove, "am I not separated from the partner of my heart—and that too in the happy spring-time—the very season of love?"

"Of love!" echoed Ahmed. "I pray thee, my pretty bird, canst thou then tell me what is love?"

"Too well can I, my prince. It is the torment of one, the felicity of two, the strife and enmity of three. It is a charm which draws two beings together, and unites them by delicious sympathies, making it happiness to be with each other, but misery to be apart. Is there no being to whom you are drawn by these ties of tender affection?"

"I like my old teacher, Ebon Bonabbon, better than any

other being; but he is often tedious, and I occasionally feel myself happier without his society."

"That is not the sympathy I mean. I speak of love, the great mystery and principle of life; the intoxicating revel of youth; the sober delight of age. Look forth my prince, and behold how at this blest season all nature is full of love. Every created being has its mate; the most insignificant bird sings to its paramour; the very beetle woos its lady beetle in the dust, and yon butterflies which you see fluttering high above the tower and toying in the air are happy in each other's love. Alas, my prince! hast thou spent so many of the precious days of youth without knowing any thing of love! Is there no gentle being of another sex; no beautiful princess, or lovely damsel who has ensnared your heart, and filled your bosom with a soft tumult of pleasing pains and tender wishes?"

"I begin to understand!" said the prince sighing. "Such a tumult I have more than once experienced without knowing the cause; and where should I seek for an object such as you describe in this dismal solitude?"

A little further conversation ensued, and the first amatory lesson of the prince was complete.

"Alas!" said he, "if love be indeed such a delight, and its interruption such a misery, Allah forbid that I should mar the joy of any of its votaries." He opened the cage, took out the dove, and, having fondly kissed it, carried it to the window. "Go, happy bird," said he, "rejoice with the partner of thy heart in the days of youth and spring-time. Why should I make thee a fellow prisoner in this dreary tower, where love can never enter?"

The dove flapped its wings in rapture, gave one vault into the air, and then swooped downward on whistling wings to the blooming bowers of the Darro.

The prince followed him with his eyes, and then gave way to bitter repining. The singing of the birds which once delighted him now added to his bitterness. Love! love! love! Alas, poor youth, he now understood the strain.

His eyes flashed fire when next he beheld the sage Bonabon. "Why hast thou kept me in this abject ignorance?" cried he. "Why has the great mystery and principle of life been withheld from me, in which I find the meanest insect is so learned? Behold all nature is in a revel of delight. Every created being rejoices with its mate. This—this is the love about which I have sought instruction; why am I alone de-

barred its enjoyment? why hast so much of my youth been wasted without a knowledge of its rapture?"

The sage Bonabbon saw that all further reserve was useless, for the prince had acquired the dangerous and forbidden knowledge. He revealed to him, therefore, the predictions of the astrologers, and the precautions that had been taken in his education to avert the threatened evils. "And now, my prince," added he, "my life is in your hands. Let the king your father discover that you have learned the passion of love while under my guardianship, and my head must answer for it."

The prince was as reasonable as most young men of his age, and easily listened to the remonstrances of his tutor, since nothing pleaded against them. Beside, he really was attached to the sage Bonabbon, and being as yet but theoretically acquainted with the passion of love, he consented to confine the knowledge of it to his own bosom, rather than endanger the head of the philosopher. His discretion was doomed, however, to be put to still further proofs. A few mornings afterwards, as he was ruminating on the battlements of the tower, the dove which had been released by him came hovering in the air, and alighted fearlessly upon his shoulder.

The prince fondled it to his breast. "Happy bird," said he, "who can fly, as it were, with the wings of the morning to the uttermost parts of the earth. Where hast thou been since we parted?"

"In a far country, my prince; from whence I bring you tidings in reward for my liberty. In the wide compass of my flight, which extends over plain and mountain, as I was soaring in the air, I beheld below me a delightful garden with all kinds of fruits and flowers. It was in a green meadow on the banks of a meandering stream, and in the centre of the garden was a stately palace. I alighted in one of the bowers to repose after my weary flight; on the green bank below me was a youthful princess in the very sweetness and bloom of her years. She was surrounded by female attendants, young like herself, who decked her with garlands and coronets of flowers; but no flower of field or garden could compare with her for loveliness. Here, however, she bloomed in secret, for the garden was surrounded by high walls, and no mortal man was permitted to enter. When I beheld this beauteous maid thus young, and innocent, and unspotted by the world, I

thought, here is the being formed by heaven to inspire my prince with love."

The description was as a spark of fire to the combustible heart of Ahmed; all the latent amorousness of his temperament had at once found an object, and he conceived an immeasurable passion for the princess. He wrote a letter couched in the most impassioned language, breathing his fervent devotion, but bewailing the unhappy thralldom of his person, which prevented him from seeking her out, and throwing himself at her feet. He added couplets of the most tender and moving eloquence, for he was a poet by nature and inspired by love. He addressed his letter, "To the unknown beauty, from the captive prince Ahmed," then perfuming it with musk and roses, he gave it to the dove.

"Away, trustiest of messengers," said he. "Fly over mountain, and valley, and river, and plain; rest not in bower nor set foot on earth, until thou hast given this letter to the mistress of my heart."

The dove soared high in air, and taking his course darted away in one undeviating direction. The prince followed him with his eye until he was a mere speck on a cloud, and gradually disappeared behind a mountain.

Day after day he watched for the return of the messenger of love; but he watched in vain. He began to accuse him of forgetfulness, when towards sunset, one evening, the faithful bird fluttered into his apartment, and, falling at his feet, expired. The arrow of some wanton archer had pierced his breast, yet he had struggled with the lingerings of life to execute his mission. As the prince bent with grief over this gentle martyr to fidelity, he beheld a chain of pearls round his neck, attached to which, beneath his wing, was a small enamelled picture. It represented a lovely princess in the very flower of her years. It was, doubtless, the unknown beauty of the garden: but who and where was she—how had she received his letter—and was this picture sent as a token of an approval of his passion? Unfortunately, the death of the faithful dove left every thing in mystery and doubt.

The prince gazed on the picture till his eyes swam with tears. He pressed it to his lips and to his heart: he sat for hours contemplating it in an almost agony of tenderness. "Beautiful image!" said he. "Alas, thou art but an image. Yet thy dewy eyes beam tenderly upon me; those rosy lips look as though they would speak encouragement. Vain fan-

cies! Have they not looked the same on some more happy rival? But where in this wide world shall I hope to find the original? Who knows what mountains, what realms may separate us? What adverse chance may intervene? Perhaps now, even now, lovers may be crowding around her, while I sit here, a prisoner in a tower, wasting my time in adoration of a painted shadow."

The resolution of prince Ahmed was taken. "I will fly from this palace," said he, "which has become an odious prison, and, a pilgrim of love, will seek this unknown princess throughout the world."

To escape from the tower in the day, when every one was awake, might be a difficult matter; but at night the palace was slightly guarded, for no one apprehended any attempt of the kind from the prince, who had always been so passive in his captivity. How was he to guide himself, however, in his darkling flight, being ignorant of the country? He bethought him of the owl, who was accustomed to roam at night, and must know every by-lane and secret pass. Seeking him in his hermitage, he questioned him touching his knowledge of the land. Upon this the owl put on a mighty self-important look.

"You must know, O prince," said he, "that we owls are of a very ancient and extensive family, though rather fallen to decay, and possess ruinous castles and palaces in all parts of Spain. There is scarcely a tower of the mountains, or fortress of the plains, or an old citadel of a city but has some brother, or uncle, or cousin quartered in it; and in going the rounds to visit these my numerous kindred I have pryed into every nook and corner, and made myself acquainted with every secret of the land."

The prince was overjoyed to find the owl so deeply versed in topography, and now informed him, in confidence, of his tender passion and his intended elopement, urging him to be his companion and counsellor.

"Go to!" said the owl, with a look of displeasure. "Am I a bird, to engage in a love affair; I whose whole time is devoted to meditation and the moon!"

"Be not offended, most solemn owl!" replied the prince. "Abstract thyself for a time from meditation and the moon, and aid me in my flight, and thou shalt have whatever heart can wish."

"I have that already," said the owl. "A few mice are sufficient for my frugal table, and this hole in the wall is spacious

enough for my studies, and what more does a philosopher like myself desire?"

"Bethink thee, most wise owl, that while moping in thy cell and gazing at the moon all thy talents are lost to the world. I shall one day be a sovereign prince, and may advance thee to some post of honour and dignity."

The owl, though a philosopher and above the ordinary wants of life, was not above ambition, so he was finally prevailed upon to elope with the prince, and be his guide and Mentor in his pilgrimage.

The plans of a lover are promptly executed. The prince collected all his jewels, and concealed them about his person as travelling funds. That very night he lowered himself by his scarf from a balcony of the tower, clambered over the outer walls of the Generaliffe, and, guided by the owl, made good his escape before morning to the mountains.

He now held a council with his Mentor as to his future course.

"Might I advise," said the owl, "I would recommend you to repair to Seville. You must know that many years since I was on a visit to an uncle, an owl of great dignity and power, who lived in a ruined wing of the Alcazar of that place. In my hoverings at night over the city, I frequently remarked a light burning in a lonely tower. At length I alighted on the battlements, and found it to proceed from the lamp of an Arabian magician. He was surrounded by his magic books, and on his shoulder was perched his familiar, an ancient raven, who had come with him from Egypt. I became acquainted with that raven, and owe to him a great part of the knowledge I possess. The magician is since dead, but the raven still inhabits the tower, for these birds are of wonderful long life. I would advise you, O prince, to seek that raven, for he is a soothsayer and a conjuror, and deals in the black art, for which all ravens, and especially those of Egypt, are renowned."

The prince was struck with the wisdom of this advice, and accordingly bent his course towards Seville. He travelled only in the night, to accommodate his companion, and lay by during the day in some dark cavern or mouldering watch-tower, for the owl knew every hiding hole of the kind in the country, and had a most antiquarian taste for ruins.

At length, one morning at day-break, they reached the city of Seville, where the owl, who hated the glare and bustle of

crowded streets, halted without the gate, and took up his quarters in a hollow tree.

The prince entered the gate, and readily found the magic tower, which rose above the houses of the city as a palm-tree rises above the shrubs of the desert. It was, in fact, the same tower known at the present day as the Giralda, the famous Moorish tower of Seville.

The prince ascended by a great winding staircase to the summit of the tower, where he found the cabalistic raven, an old, mysterious, gray-headed bird, ragged in feather, with a film over one eye that gave him the glare of a spectre. He was perched on one leg, with his head turned on one side, and poring with his remaining eye on a diagram described on the pavement.

The prince approached him with the awe and reverence naturally inspired by his venerable appearance and supernatural wisdom. "Pardon me, most ancient and darkly wise raven," exclaimed he, "if for a moment I interrupt those studies which are the wonder of the world. You behold before you a votary of love, who would fain seek counsel how to obtain the object of his passion."

"In other words," said the raven, with a significant look, "you seek to try my skill in palmistry. Come, show me your hand, and let me decipher the mysterious lines of fortune."

"Excuse me," said the prince, "I come not to pry into the decrees of fate, which are hidden by Allah from the eyes of mortals. I am a pilgrim of love, and seek but to find a clue to the object of my pilgrimage."

"And can you be at any loss for an object in amorous Andalusia?" said the old raven, leering upon him with his single eye. "Above all, can you be at a loss in wanton Seville, where black-eyed damsels dance the zambra under every orange grove?"

The prince blushed, and was somewhat shocked at hearing an old bird, with one foot in the grave, talk thus loosely. "Believe me," said he gravely, "I am on none such light and vagrant errand as thou dost insinuate. The black-eyed damsels of Andalusia who dance among the orange groves of the Guadalquivir, are as naught to me. I seek one unknown but immaculate beauty, the original of this picture, and I beseech thee, most potent raven, if it be within the scope of thy knowledge, or the reach of thy art, inform me where she may be found."

The gray-headed raven was rebuked by the gravity of the prince. "What know I," replied he dryly, "of youth and beauty? My visits are to the old and withered, not the young and fair. The harbinger of fate am I, who croak bodings of death from the chimney top, and flap my wings at the sick man's window. You must seek elsewhere for tidings of your unknown beauty."

"And where am I to seek, if not among the sons of wisdom, versed in the book of destiny? A royal prince am I, fated by the stars, and sent on a mysterious enterprise, on which may hang the destiny of empires."

When the raven heard that it was a matter of vast moment, in which the stars took interest, he changed his tone and manner, and listened with profound attention to the story of the prince. When it was concluded, he replied, "Touching this princess, I can give thee no information of myself, for my flight is not among gardens or around ladies' bowers; but hie thee to Cordova, seek the palm-tree of the great Abderahman, which stands in the court of the principal mosque; at the foot of it you will find a great traveller, who has visited all countries and courts, and been a favourite with queens and princesses. He will give you tidings of the object of your search."

"Many thanks for this precious information," said the prince. "Farewell, most venerable conjuror."

"Farewell, pilgrim of love," said the raven dryly, and again fell to pondering on the diagram.

The prince sallied forth from Seville, sought his fellow-traveller the owl, who was still dozing in the hollow tree, and set off for Cordova.

He approached it along hanging gardens, and orange and citron groves overlooking the fair valley of the Guadalquivir. When arrived at its gates, the owl flew up to a dark hole in the wall, and the prince proceeded in quest of the palm-tree planted in days of yore by the great Abderahman. It stood in the midst of the great court of the Mosque, towering from amidst orange and cypress trees. Dervises and Faquirs were seated in groups under the cloisters of the court, and many of the faithful were performing their ablutions at the fountains, before entering the Mosque.

At the foot of the palm-tree was a crowd listening to the words of one who appeared to be talking with great volubility. This, said the prince to himself, must be the great traveller

who is to give me tidings of the unknown princess. He mingled in the crowd, but was astonished to perceive that they were all listening to a parrot, who, with his bright green coat, pragmatical eye, and consequential topknot, had the air of a bird on excellent terms with himself.

"How is this," said the prince to one of the bystanders, "that so many grave persons can be delighted with the garrulity of a chattering bird?"

"You know not of whom you speak," said the other; "this parrot is a descendant of the famous parrot of Persia, renowned for his story-telling talent. He has all the learning of the East at the tip of his tongue, and can quote poetry as fast as he can talk. He has visited various foreign courts, where he has been considered an oracle of erudition. He has been a universal favourite also with the fair sex, who have a vast admiration for erudite parrots that can quote poetry."

"Enough," said the prince, "I will have some private talk with this distinguished traveller."

He sought a private interview, and expounded the nature of his errand. He had scarcely mentioned it when the parrot burst into a fit of dry rickety laughter, that absolutely brought tears in his eyes. "Excuse my mirth," said he, "but the mere mention of love always sets me laughing."

The prince was shocked at this ill-timed merriment. "Is not love," said he, "the great mystery of nature,—the secret principle of life,—the universal bond of sympathy?"

"A fig's end!" cried the parrot, interrupting him. "Pry'thee where hast thou learnt this sentimental jargon? Trust me, love is quite out of vogue; one never hears of it in the company of wits and people of refinement."

The prince sighed as he recalled the different language of his friend the dove. But this parrot, thought he, has lived about court; he affects the wit and the fine gentleman; he knows nothing of the thing called love.

Unwilling to provoke any more ridicule of the sentiment which filled his heart, he now directed his inquiries to the immediate purport of his visit.

"Tell me," said he, "most accomplished parrot, thou who hast every where been admitted to the most secret bowers of beauty, hast thou in the course of thy travels met with the original of this portrait?"

The parrot took the picture in his claw, turned his head from side to side, and examined it curiously with either eye. "Upon

my honour," said he, "a very pretty face; very pretty. But then one sees so many pretty women in one's travels that one can hardly—but hold—bless me! now I look at it again—sure enough, this is the princess Aldegonda: how could I forget one that is so prodigious a favourite with me?"

"The princess Aldegonda!" echoed the prince, "and where is she to be found?"

"Softly—softly," said the parrot, "easier to be found than gained. She is the only daughter of the Christian king who reigns at Toledo, and is shut up from the world until her seventeenth birth-day, on account of some prediction of those meddling fellows, the astrologers. You'll not get a sight of her, no mortal man can see her. I was admitted to her presence to entertain her, and I assure you, on the word of a parrot who has seen the world, I have conversed with much sillier princesses in my time."

"A word in confidence, my dear parrot," said the prince. "I am heir to a kingdom, and shall one day sit upon a throne. I see that you are a bird of parts and understood the word. Help me to gain possession of this princess and I will advance you to some distinguished post about court."

"With all my heart," said the parrot; "but let it be a sinecure if possible, for we wits have a great dislike to labour."

Arrangements were promptly made; the prince sallied forth from Cordova through the same gate by which he had entered; called the owl down from the hole in the wall, introduced him to his new travelling companion as a brother sçavant, and away they set off on their journey.

They travelled much more slowly than accorded with the impatience of the prince, but the parrot was accustomed to high life, and did not like to be disturbed early in the morning. The owl, on the other hand, was for sleeping at mid-day, and lost a great deal of time by his long siestas. His antiquarian taste also was in the way; for he insisted on pausing and inspecting every ruin, and had long legendary tales to tell about every old tower and castle in the country. The prince had supposed that he and the parrot, being both birds of learning, could delight in each other's society, but never had he been more mistaken. They were eternally bickering. The one was a wit, the other a philosopher. The parrot quoted poetry, was critical on new readings, and eloquent on small points of erudition; the owl treated all such knowledge as trifling, and relished nothing but metaphysics. Then the parrot would sing

songs and repeat bon mots, and crack jokes upon his solemn neighbour, and laugh outrageously at his own wit; all which the owl considered a grievous invasion of his dignity, and would scowl, and sulk, and swell, and sit silent for a whole day together.

The prince heeded not the wranglings of his companions, being wrapped up in the dreams of his own fancy, and the contemplation of the portrait of the beautiful princess. In this way they journeyed through the stern passes of the Sierra Morena, across the sunburnt plains of La Mancha and Castile, and along the banks of the "Golden Tagus," which winds its wizard mazes over one-half of Spain and Portugal. At length, they came in sight of a strong city with walls and towers, built on a rocky promontory, round the foot of which the Tagus circled with brawling violence.

"Behold," exclaimed the owl, "the ancient and renowned city of Toledo; a city famous for its antiquities. Behold those venerable domes and towers, hoary with time, and clothed with legendary grandeur; in which so many of my ancestors have meditated—"

"Pish," cried the parrot, interrupting his solemn antiquarian rapture, "what have we to do with antiquities, and legends, and your ancestors? Behold, what is more to the purpose, behold the abode of youth and beauty,—behold, at length, oh prince, the abode of your long sought princess."

The prince looked in the direction indicated by the parrot, and beheld, in a delightful green meadow on the banks of the Tagus, a stately palace rising from amidst the bowers of a delicious garden. It was just such a place as had been described by the dove as the residence of the original of the picture. He gazed at it with a throbbing heart: "Perhaps at this moment," thought he, "the beautiful princess is sporting beneath those shady bowers, or pacing with delicate step those stately terraces, or reposing beneath those lofty roofs!" As he looked more narrowly, he perceived that the walls of the garden were of great height, so as to defy access, while numbers of armed guards patrolled around them.

The prince turned to the parrot. "Oh most accomplished of birds," said he, "thou hast the gift of human speech. Hie thee to yon garden; seek the idol of my soul, and tell her that prince Ahmed, a pilgrim of love, and guided by the stars, has arrived in quest of her on the flowery banks of the Tagus."

The parrot, proud of his embassy, flew away to the garden

mounted above its lofty walls, and, after soaring for a time over the lawns and groves, alighted on the balcony of a pavilion that overhung the river. Here, looking in at the casement, he beheld the princess reclining on a couch, with her eyes fixed on a paper, while tears gently stole after each other down her pallid cheek.

Pluming his wings for a moment, adjusting his bright green coat, and elevating his topknot, the parrot perched himself beside her with a gallant air; then assuming a tenderness of tone, —

“Dry thy tears, most beautiful of princesses,” said he, “I come to bring solace to thy heart.”

The princess was startled on hearing a voice, but turning and seeing nothing but a little green-coated bird bobbing and bowing before her:—“Alas! what solace canst thou yield,” said she, “seeing thou art but a parrot?”

The parrot was nettled at the question. “I have consoled many beautiful ladies in my time,” said he; “but let that pass. At present, I come ambassador from a royal prince. Know that Ahmed, the prince of Granada, has arrived in quest of thee, and is encamped even now on the flowery banks of the Tagus.”

The eyes of the beautiful princess sparkled at these words, even brighter than the diamonds in her coronet. “O sweetest of parrots,” cried she, “joyful indeed are thy tidings; for I was faint, and weary, and sick almost unto death, with doubt of the constancy of Ahmed. Hie thee back, and tell him that the words of his letter are engraven in my heart, and his poetry has been the food of my soul. Tell him, however, that he must prepare to prove his love by force of arms; to-morrow is my seventeenth birth-day, when the king, my father, holds a great tournament; several princes are to enter the lists, and my hand is to be the prize of the victor.”

The parrot again took wing, and, rustling through the groves, flew back to where the prince awaited his return. The rapture of Ahmed on finding the original of his adored portrait, and finding her kind and true, can only be conceived by those favoured mortals, who have had the good fortune to realize day dreams, and turn shadows into substance. Still there was one thing that alloyed his transport,—this impending tournament. In fact, the banks of the Tagus were already glittering with arms, and resounding with trumpets of the various knights, who with proud retinues were prancing on towards Toledo to

attend the ceremonial. The same star that had controlled the destiny of the prince, had governed that of the princess, and until her seventeenth birth-day, she had been shut up from the world, to guard her from the tender passion. The fame of her charms, however, had been enhanced, rather than obscured by this seclusion. Several powerful princes had contended for her alliance, and her father, who was a king of wondrous shrewdness, to avoid making enemies by showing partiality, had referred them to the arbitrament of arms. Among the rival candidates, were several renowned for strength and prowess. What a predicament for the unfortunate Ahmed, unprovided as he was with weapons, and unskilled in the exercises of chivalry. "Luckless prince that I am!" said he, "to have been brought up in seclusion, under the eye of a philosopher! of what avail are algebra and philosophy in affairs of love! alas, Ebon Bonabbon, why hast thou neglected to instruct me in the management of arms?" Upon this the owl broke silence prefacing his harangue with a pious ejaculation, for he was a devout Mussulman:

"Allah Achbar! 'God is great,'" exclaimed he, "in his hands are all secret things, he alone governs the destiny of princes! Know, O prince, that this land is full of mysteries, hidden from all but those who, like myself, can grope after knowledge in the dark. Know that in the neighbouring mountains there is a cave, and in that cave there is an iron table, and on that table lies a suit of magic armour, and beside that table stands a spell-bound steed, which have been shut up there for many generations."

The prince stared with wonder, while the owl blinking his huge round eyes and erecting his horns proceeded:

"Many years since, I accompanied my father to these parts on a tour of his estates, and we sojourned in that cave, and thus became I acquainted with the mystery. It is a tradition in our family, which I have heard from my grandfather when I was yet but a very little owlet, that this armour belonged to a Moorish magician, who took refuge in this cavern when Toledo was captured by the Christians, and died here, leaving his steed and weapons under a mystic spell, never to be used but by a Moslem, and by him only from sunrise to mid-day. In that interval, whoever uses them, will overthrow every opponent."

"Enough, let us seek this cave," exclaimed Ahmed.

Guided by his legendary Mentor, the prince found the

cavern, which was in one of the wildest recesses of those rocky cliffs which rose around Toledo; none but the mousing eye of an owl or an antiquary could have discovered the entrance to it. A sepulchral lamp of everlasting oil shed a solemn light through the place. On an iron table in the centre of the cavern lay the magic armour, against it leaned the lance, and beside it stood an Arabian steed, caparisoned for the field, but motionless as a statue. The armour was bright and unsullied, as it had gleamed in days of old; the steed in as good condition as if just from the pasture, and when Ahmed laid his hand upon his neck, he pawed the ground and gave a loud neigh of joy that shook the walls of the cavern. Thus provided with horse to ride and weapon to wear, the prince determined to defy the field at the impending tourney.

The eventful morning arrived. The lists for the combat were prepared in the Vega or plain just below the cliff-built walls of Toledo. Here were erected stages and galleries for the spectators, covered with rich tapestry and sheltered from the sun by silken awnings. All the beauties of the land were assembled in those galleries, while below pranced plumed knights with their pages and esquires, among whom figured conspicuously the princes who were to contend in the tourney. All the beauties of the land, however, were eclipsed, when the princess Aldagonda appeared in the royal pavilion, and for the first time broke forth upon the gaze of an admiring world. A murmur of wonder ran through the crowd at her transcendent loveliness; and the princes who were candidates for her hand merely on the faith of her reported charms, now felt ten-fold ardour for the conflict.

The princess, however, had a troubled look. The colour came and went from her cheek, and her eye wandered with a restless and unsatisfied expression over the plumed throng of knights. The trumpets were about sounding for the encounter when a herald announced the arrival of a stranger knight, and Ahmed rode into the field. A steeled helmet studded with gems rose above his turban; his cuirass was embossed with gold; his scimitar and dagger were of the workmanship of Fay, and flamed with precious stones. A round shield was at his shoulder, and in his hand he bore the lance of charmed virtue. The caparison of his Arabian was richly embroidered, and swept the ground; and the proud animal pranced and snuffed the air, and neighed with joy at once more beholding the array of arms. The lofty and graceful demeanour of the

prince struck every eye, and when his appellation was announced, "The pilgrim of love," a universal flutter and agitation prevailed among the fair dames in the galleries.

When Ahmed presented himself at the lists, however, they were closed against him; none but princes, he was told, were admitted to the contest. He declared his name and rank. Still worse, he was a Moslem, and could not engage in a tourney where the hand of a Christian princess was the prize.

The rival princes surrounded him with haughty and menacing aspects, and one of insolent demeanour and Herculean frame sneered at his light and youthful form, and scoffed at his amorous appellation. The ire of the prince was roused; he defied his rival to the encounter. They took distance, wheeled, and charged; at the first touch of the magic lance the brawny scoffer was tilted from his saddle. Here the prince would have paused, but alas! he had to deal with a demoniac horse and armour: once in action, nothing could control them. The Arabian steed charged into the thickest of the throng: the lance overturned every thing that presented; the gentle prince was carried pell-mell about the field, strewing it with high and low, gentle and simple, and grieving at his own involuntary exploits. The king stormed and raged at this outrage on his subjects and his guests. He ordered out all his guards—they were unhorsed as fast as they came up. The king threw off his robes, grasped buckler and lance, and rode forth to awe the stranger with the presence of majesty itself. Alas, majesty fared no better than the vulgar; the steed and lance were no respecters of persons; to the dismay of Ahmed, he was borne full tilt against the king, and in a moment the royal heels were in the air, and the crown was rolling in the dust.

At this moment the sun reached the meridian; the magic spell resumed its power. The Arabian steed scoured across the plain, leaped the barrier, plunged into the Tagus, swam its raging current, bore the prince, breathless and amazed, to the cavern, and resumed his station like a statue beside the iron table. The prince dismounted right gladly, and replaced the armour, to abide the further decrees of fate. Then seating himself in the cavern, he ruminated on the desperate state to which this bedeviled steed and armour had reduced him. Never should he dare to show his face at Toledo, after inflicting such disgrace upon its chivalry, and such an outrage on its king. What, too, would the princess think of so rude and riotous an achievement? Full of anxiety, he sent forth his

winged messengers to gather tidings. The parrot resorted to all the public places and crowded resorts of the city, and soon returned with a world of gossip. All Toledo was in consternation. The princess had been borne off senseless to the palace; the tournament had ended in confusion; every one was talking of the sudden apparition, prodigious exploits, and strange disappearance of the Moslem knight. Some pronounced him a Moorish magician; others thought him a demon who had assumed a human shape; while others related traditions of enchanted warriors hidden in the caves of the mountains, and thought it might be one of these, who had made a sudden irruption from his den. All agreed that no mere ordinary mortal could have wrought such wonders, or unhorsed such accomplished and stalwart Christian warriors.

The owl flew forth at night, and hovered about the dusky city, perching on the roofs and chimneys. He then wheeled his flight up to the royal palace, which stood on the rocky summit of Toledo, and went prowling about its terraces and battlements, eaves-dropping at every cranny, and glaring in with his big goggling eyes at every window where there was a light, so as to throw two or three maids of honour into fits. It was not until the gray dawn began to peer above the mountains that he returned from his mousing expedition, and related to the prince what he had seen.

"As I was prying about one of the loftiest towers of the palace," said he, "I beheld through a casement a beautiful princess. She was reclining on a couch, with attendants and physicians around her, but she would none of their ministry and relief. When they retired, I beheld her draw forth a letter from her bosom, and read, and kiss it, and give way to loud lamentations; at which, philosopher as I am, I could not but be greatly moved."

The tender heart of Ahmed was distressed at these tidings. "Too true were thy words, oh sage Ebon Bonabbon!" cried he. "Care and sorrow, and sleepless nights are the lot of lovers. Allah preserve the princess from the blighting influence of this thing called love."

Further intelligence from Toledo corroborated the report of the owl. The city was a prey to uneasiness and alarm. The princess was conveyed to the highest tower of the palace, every avenue to which was strongly guarded. In the mean time, a devouring melancholy had seized upon her, of which no one could divine the cause. She refused food, and turned a deaf

ear to every consolation. The most skilful physicians had essayed their art in vain; it was thought some magic spell had been practised upon her, and the king made proclamation, declaring that whoever should effect her cure, should receive the richest jewel in the royal treasury.

When the owl, who was dozing in a corner, heard of this proclamation, he rolled his large eyes and looked more mysterious than ever.

"Allah Achbar!" exclaimed he. "Happy the man that shall effect that cure, should he but know what to choose from the royal treasury."

"What mean you, most reverend owl?" said Ahmed.

"Hearken, O prince, to what I shall relate. We owls, you must know, are a learned body, and much given to dark and dusty research. During my late prowling at night about the domes and turrets of Toledo, I discovered a college of antiquarian owls, who hold their meetings in a great vaulted tower where the royal treasure is deposited. Here they were discussing the forms and inscriptions, and designs of ancient gems and jewels, and of golden and silver vessels, heaped up in the treasury, the fashion of every country and age: but mostly they were interested about certain reliques and talismans, that have remained in the treasury since the time of Roderick the Goth. Among these, was a box of shittim wood, secured by bands of steel of oriental workmanship, and inscribed with mystic characters known only to the learned few. This box and its inscription had occupied the college for several sessions, and had caused much long and grave dispute. At the time of my visit, a very ancient owl, who had recently arrived from Egypt, was seated on the lid of the box lecturing upon the inscription, and proved from it, that the coffer contained the silken carpet of the throne of Solomon the wise: which doubtless had been brought to Toledo by the Jews, who took refuge there after the downfall of Jerusalem."

When the owl had concluded his antiquarian harangue, the prince remained for a time absorbed in thought. "I have heard," said he, "from the sage Ebon Bonabbon, of the wonderful properties of that talisman, which disappeared at the fall of Jerusalem, and was supposed to be lost to mankind. Doubtless it remains a sealed mystery to the Christians of Toledo. If I can get possession of that carpet, my fortune is secure."

The next day the prince laid aside his rich attire, and ar-

rayed himself in the simple garb of an Arab of the desert. He dyed his complexion to a tawny hue, and no one could have recognized in him the splendid warrior who had caused such admiration and dismay at the tournament. With staff in hand and scrip by his side, and a small pastoral reed, he repaired to Toledo, and presenting himself at the gate of the royal palace, announced himself as a candidate for the reward offered for the cure of the princess. The guards would have driven him away with blows: "What can a vagrant Arab like thyself pretend to do," said they, "in a case where the most learned of the land have failed?" The king, however, overheard the tumult, and ordered the Arab to be brought into his presence.

"Most potent king," said Ahmed, "you behold before you a Bedouin Arab, the greater part of whose life has been passed in the solitudes of the desert. Those solitudes, it is well known, are the haunts of demons and evil spirits, who beset us poor shepherds in our lonely watchings, enter into and possess our flocks and herds, and sometimes render even the patient camel furious. Against these, our countercharm is music; and we have legendary airs handed down from generation to generation, that we chant and pipe to cast forth these evil spirits. I am of a gifted line, and possess this power in its fullest force. If it be any evil influence of the kind that holds a spell over thy daughter, I pledge my head to free her from its sway."

The king, who was a man of understanding, and knew the wonderful secrets possessed by the Arabs, was inspired with hope by the confident language of the prince. He conducted him immediately to the lofty tower secured by several doors, in the summit of which was the chamber of the princess. The windows opened upon a terrace with balustrades, commanding a view over Toledo and all the surrounding country. The windows were darkened, for the princess lay within, a prey to a devouring grief that refused all alleviation.

The prince seated himself on the terrace, and performed several wild Arabian airs on his pastoral pipe, which he had learnt from his attendants in the Generaliffe at Granada. The princess continued insensible, and the doctors, who were present, shook their heads, and smiled with incredibility and contempt. At length the prince laid aside the reed, and to a simple melody chanted the amatory verses of the letter which had declared his passion.

The princess recognized the strain. A fluttering joy stole to her heart; she raised her head and listened; tears rushed to her eyes and streamed down her cheeks; her bosom rose and fell with a tumult of emotions. She would have asked for the minstrel to be brought into her presence, but maiden coyness held her silent. The king read her wishes, and at his command Ahmed was conducted into the chamber. The lovers were discreet: they but exchanged glances, yet those glances spoke volumes. Never was triumph of music more complete. The rose had returned to the soft cheek of the princess, the freshness to her lip, and the dewy light to her languishing eye.

All the physicians present stared at each other with astonishment. The king regarded the Arab minstrel with admiration, mixt with awe. "Wonderful youth," exclaimed he, "thou shalt henceforth be the first physician of my court, and no other prescription will I take but thy melody. For the present, receive thy reward, the most precious jewel in my treasury."

"O king," replied Ahmed, "I care not for silver, or gold, or precious stones. One relique hast thou in thy treasury, handed down from the Moslems who once owned Toledo. A box of sandal wood containing a silken carpet. Give me that box, and I am content."

All present were surprised at the moderation of the Arab; and still more, when the box of sandal wood was brought and the carpet drawn forth. It was of fine green silk, covered with Hebrew and Chaldaic characters. The court physicians looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders, and smiled at the simplicity of this new practitioner, who could be content with so paltry a fee.

"This carpet," said the prince, "once covered the throne of Solomon the wise; it is worthy of being placed beneath the feet of beauty."

So saying, he spread it on the terrace beneath an ottoman that had been brought forth for the princess; then seating himself at her feet,—

"Who," said he, "shall counteract what is written in the book of fate? Behold the prediction of the astrologers verified. Know, oh king, that your daughter and I have long loved each other in secret. Behold in me the pilgrim of love."

These words were scarcely from his lips, when the carpet rose in the air, bearing off the prince and princess. The king and the physicians gazed after it with open mouths and strain-

ing eyes, until it became a little speck on the white bosom of a cloud, and then disappeared in the blue vault of heaven.

The king in a rage summoned his treasurer. "How is this," said he, "that thou hast suffered an infidel to get possession of such a talisman?"

"Alas! sire, we knew not its nature, nor could we decipher the inscription of the box. If it be indeed the carpet of the throne of the wise Solomon, it is possessed of magic power, and can transport its owner from place to place through the air."

The king assembled a mighty army, and set off for Granada in pursuit of the fugitives. His march was long and toilsome. Encamping in the Vega, he sent a herald to demand restitution of his daughter. The king himself came forth with all his court to meet him. In the king, he beheld the Arab minstrel, for Ahmed had succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, and the beautiful Aldegonda was his Sultana.

The Christian king was easily pacified, when he found that his daughter was suffered to continue in her faith: not that he was particularly pious; but religion is always a point of pride and etiquette with princes. Instead of bloody battles, there was a succession of feasts and rejoicings; after which, the king returned well pleased to Toledo, and the youthful couple continued to reign as happily as wisely, in the Alhambra.

It is proper to add, that the owl and the parrot had severally followed the prince by easy stages to Granada: the former travelling by night, and stopping at the various hereditary possessions of his family; the latter figuring in the gay circles of every town and city on his route.

Ahmed gratefully requited the services which they had rendered him on his pilgrimage. He appointed the owl his prime minister; the parrot his master of ceremonies. It is needless to say that never was a realm more sagely administered, or a court conducted with more exact punctilio.

THE LEGEND OF THE ROSE OF THE ALHAMBRA;

OR,

THE PAGE AND THE GER-FALCON.

For some time after the surrender of Granada by the Moors, that delightful city was a frequent and favourite residence of the Spanish sovereigns, until they were frightened away by successive shocks of earthquakes, which toppled down various houses and made the old Moslem towers rock to their foundation.

Many, many years then rolled away, during which Granada was rarely honoured by a royal guest. The palaces of the nobility remained silent and shut up; and the Alhambra, like a slighted beauty, sat in mournful desolation among her neglected gardens. The tower of the Infantas, once the residence of the three beautiful Moorish princesses, partook of the general desolation; and the spider spun her web athwart the gilded vault, and bats and owls nestled in those chambers that had been graced by the presence of Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda. The neglect of the tower may partly have been owing to some superstitious notions of the neighbours. It was rumoured that the spirit of the youthful Zorahayda, who had perished in that tower, was often seen by moonlight, seated beside the fountain in the hall, or moaning about the battlements, and that the notes of her silver lute would be heard at midnight by wayfarers passing along the glen.

At length the city of Granada was once more enlivened by the royal presence. All the world knows that Philip V. was the first Bourbon that swayed the Spanish sceptre. All the world knows that he married, in second nuptials, Elizabetta or Isabella, (for they are the same,) the beautiful princess of Parma; and all the world knows, that by this chain of contingencies, a French prince and an Italian princess were seated together on the Spanish throne. For the reception of this illustrious pair, the Alhambra was repaired and fitted up with all possible expedition. The arrival of the court changed the whole aspect of the lately deserted place. The clangour of drum and trumpet, the tramp of steed about the avenues and outer

court, the glitter of arms and display of banners about barbi-can and battlement, recalled the ancient and warlike glories of the fortress. A softer spirit, however, reigned within the royal palace. There was the rustling of robes, and the cautious tread and murmuring voice of reverential courtiers about the antechambers; a loitering of pages and maids of honour about the gardens, and the sound of music stealing from open case-ments.

Among those who attended in the train of the monarchs, was a favourite page of the queen, named Ruyz de Alarcon. To say that he was a favourite page of the queen, was at once to speak his eulogium, for every one in the suite of the stately Elizabetta was chosen for grace, and beauty, and accomplishments. He was just turned of eighteen, light and little of form, and graceful as a young Antinous. To the queen he was all deference and respect, yet he was at heart a roguish strip-ling, petted and spoiled by the ladies about the court, and experienced in the ways of women far beyond his years.

This loitering page was one morning rambling about the groves of the Generaliffe, which overlook the grounds of the Alhambra. He had taken with him for his amusement, a favourite ger-falcon of the queen. In the course of his rambles, seeing a bird rising from a thicket, he unhooded the hawk and let him fly. The falcon towered high in the air, made a swoop at his quarry, but missing it, soared away regardless of the calls of the page. The latter followed the truant bird with his eye in its capricious flight, until he saw it alight upon the battle-ments of a remote and lonely tower, in the outer wall of the Alhambra, built on the edge of a ravine that separated the royal fortress from the grounds of the Generaliffe. It was, in fact, the "tower of the Princesses."

The page descended into the ravine, and approached the tower, but it had no entrance from the glen, and its lofty height rendered any attempt to scale it fruitless. Seeking one of the gates of the fortress, therefore, he made a wide circuit to that side of the tower facing within the walls. A small garden enclosed by a trellis-work of reeds overhung with myrtle lay before the tower. Opening a wicket, the page passed between beds of flowers and thickets of roses to the door. It was closed and bolted. A crevice in the door gave him a peep into the interior. There was a small Moorish hall with fretted walls, light marble columns, and an alabaster fountain surrounded with flowers. In the centre hung a gilt cage containing a singing bird.

beneath it, on a chair, lay a tortoise-shell cat among reels of silk and other articles of female labour, and a guitar, decorated with ribands, leaned against the fountain.

Ruyz de Alarcon was struck with these traces of female taste and elegance in a lonely, and, as he had supposed, deserted tower. They reminded him of the tales of enchanted halls, current in the Alhambra; and the tortoise-shell cat might be some spell-bound princess.

He knocked gently at the door,—a beautiful face peeped out from a little window above, but was instantly withdrawn. He waited, expecting that the door would be opened; but he waited in vain: no footstep was to be heard within, all was silent. Had his senses deceived him, or was this beautiful apparition the fairy of the tower? He knocked again, and more loudly. After a little while, the beaming face once more peeped forth: it was that of a blooming damsel of fifteen.

The page immediately doffed his plumed bonnet, and entreated in the most courteous accents to be permitted to ascend the tower in pursuit of his falcon.

"I dare not open the door, Señor," replied the little damsel, blushing; "my aunt has forbidden it."

"I do beseech you, fair maid; it is the favourite falcon of the queen; I dare not return to the palace without it."

"Are you, then, one of the cavaliers of the court?"

"I am, fair maid; but I shall lose the queen's favour and my place if I lose this hawk."

"Santa Maria! It is against you cavaliers of the court that my aunt has charged me especially to bar the door."

"Against wicked cavaliers, doubtless; but I am none of those, but a simple, harmless page, who will be ruined and undone if you deny me this small request."

The heart of the little damsel was touched by the distress of the page. It was a thousand pities he should be ruined for the want of so trifling a boon. Surely, too, he could not be one of those dangerous beings whom her aunt had described as a species of cannibal, ever on the prowl to make prey of thoughtless damsels; he was gentle and modest, and stood so entreatingly with cap in hand, and looked so charming. The sly page saw that the garrison began to waver, and redoubled his entreaties in such moving terms, that it was not in the nature of mortal maiden to deny him; so, the blushing little warder of the tower descended and opened the door with a trembling hand; and if the page had been charmed by a mere glimpse of

her countenance from the window, he was ravished by the full-length portrait now revealed to him.

Her Andalusian bodice and trim basquina set off the round but delicate symmetry of her form, which was as yet scarce verging into womanhood. Her glossy hair was parted on her forehead with scrupulous exactness, and decorated with a fresh plucked rose, according to the universal custom of the country.

It is true, her complexion was tinged by the ardour of a southern sun, but it served to give richness to the mantling bloom of her cheek, and to heighten the lustre of her melting eyes.

Ruyz de Alarcon beheld all this with a single glance, for it became him not to tarry; he merely murmured his acknowledgments, and then bounded lightly up the spiral staircase in quest of his falcon. He soon returned with the truant bird upon his fist. The damsel, in the mean time, had seated herself by the fountain in the hall, and was winding silk; but in her agitation she let fall the reel upon the pavement. The page sprang, picked it up, then dropping gracefully on one knee, presented it to her, but, seizing the hand extended to receive it, imprinted on it a kiss more fervent and devout than he had ever imprinted on the fair hand of his sovereign.

"Ave Maria! Señor!" exclaimed the damsel, blushing still deeper with confusion and surprise, for never before had she receive such a salutation.

The modest page made a thousand apologies, assuring her it was the way, at court, of expressing the most profound homage and respect.

Her anger, if anger she felt, was easily pacified; but her agitation and embarrassment continued, and she sat blushing deeper and deeper, with her eyes cast down upon her work, entangling the silk which she attempted to wind.

The cunning page saw the confusion in the opposite camp, and would fain have profited by it, but the fine speeches he would have uttered died upon his lips; his attempts at gallantry were awkward and ineffectual: and, to his surprise, the adroit page who had figured with such grace and effrontery among the most knowing and experienced ladies of the court, found himself awed and abashed in the presence of a simple damsel of fifteen.

In fact, the artless maiden, in her own modesty and innocence, had guardians more effectual than the bolts and bars

prescribed by her vigilant aunt. Still, where is the female bosom proof against the first whisperings of love? The little damsel, with all her artlessness, instinctively comprehended all that the faltering tongue of the page failed to express, and her heart was fluttered at beholding, for the first time, a lover at her feet--and such a lover!

The diffidence of the page, though genuine, was short-lived, and he was recovering his usual ease and confidence, when a shrill voice was heard at a distance.

"My aunt is returning from mass!" cried the damsel in affright. "I pray you, Señor, depart."

"Not until you grant me that rose from your hair as a remembrance."

She hastily untwisted the rose from her raven locks. "Take it," cried she, agitated and blushing, "but pray begone."

The page took the rose, and at the same time covered with kisses the fair hand that gave it. Then placing the flower in his bonnet, and taking the falcon upon his fist, he bounded off through the garden, bearing away with him the heart of the gentle Jacinta.

When the vigilant aunt arrived at the tower, she remarked the agitation of her niece, and an air of confusion in the hall; but a word of explanation sufficed. "A ger-falcon had pursued his prey into the hall."

"Mercy on us! To think of a falcon flying into the tower. Did ever one hear of so saucy a hawk? Why, the very bird in the cage is not safe."

The vigilant Fredegonda was one of the most wary of ancient spinsters. She had a becoming terror and distrust of what she denominated "the opposite sex," which had gradually increased through a long life of celibacy. Not that the good lady had ever suffered from their wiles; nature having set up a safeguard in her face, that forbade all trespass upon her premises; but ladies who have least cause to fear for themselves, are most ready to keep a watch over their more tempting neighbours. The niece was the orphan of an officer who had fallen in the wars. She had been educated in a convent, and had recently been transferred from her sacred asylum to the immediate guardianship of her aunt; under whose overshadowing care she vegetated in obscurity, like an opening rose blooming beneath a briar. Nor, indeed, is this comparison entirely accidental, for to tell the truth her fresh and dawning beauty had caught the public eye, even in her seclusion, and,

with that poetical turn common to the people of Andalusia, the peasantry of the neighbourhood had given her the appellation of "The Rose of the Alhambra."

The wary aunt continued to keep a faithful watch over her tempting little niece as long as the court continued at Granada, and flattered herself that her vigilance had been successful. It is true, the good lady was now and then discomposed by the tinkling of guitars, and chanting of love ditties from the moonlit groves beneath the tower, but she would exhort her niece to shut her ears against such idle minstrelsy, assuring her that it was one of the arts of the opposite sex, by which simple maids were often lured to their undoing;—alas, what chance with a simple maid has a dry lecture against a moonlight serenade!

At length king Philip cut short his sojourn at Granada, and suddenly departed with all his train. The vigilant Fredegonda watched the royal pageant as it issued forth from the gate of Justice, and descended the great avenue leading to the city. When the last banner disappeared from her sight, she returned exulting to her tower, for all her cares were over. To her surprise, a light Arabian steed pawed the ground at the wicket gate of the garden;—to her horror she saw through the thickets of roses, a youth, in gaily embroidered dress, at the feet of her niece. At the sound of her footsteps he gave a tender adieu, bounded lightly over the barrier of reeds and myrtles, sprang upon his horse, and was out of sight in an instant.

The tender Jacinta in the agony of her grief lost all thought of her aunt's displeasure. Throwing herself into her arms, she broke forth into sobs and tears.

"Ay di mi!" cried she, "he is gone! he is gone! and I shall never see him more."

"Gone! who is gone? what youth is this I saw at your feet?"

"A queen's page, aunt, who came to bid me farewell."

"A queen's page, child," echoed the vigilant Fredegonda faintly, "and when did you become acquainted with a queen's page?"

"The morning that the ger-falcon flew into the tower. It was the queen's ger-falcon, and he came in pursuit of it."

"Ah, silly, silly girl! know that there are no ger-falcons half so dangerous as these pranking pages, and it is precisely such simple birds as thee that they pounce upon."

The aunt was at first indignant at learning that, in despite

of her boasted vigilance, a tender intercourse had been carried on by the youthful lovers, almost beneath her eye; but when she found that her simple-hearted niece, though thus exposed, without the protection of bolt or bar, to all the machinations of the opposite sex, had come forth unsinged from the fiery ordeal, she consoled herself with the persuasion that it was owing to the chaste and cautious maxims in which she had, as it were, steeped her to the very lips.

While the aunt laid this soothing unction to her pride, the niece treasured up the oft-repeated vows of fidelity of the page. But what is the love of restless, roving man? a vagrant stream that dallies for a time with each flower upon its banks, then passes on and leaves them all in tears.

Days, weeks, months elapsed, and nothing more was heard of the page. The pomegranate ripened, the vine yielded up its fruit, the autumnal rains descended in torrents from the mountains; the Sierra Nevada became covered with a snowy mantle, and wintry blasts howled through the halls of the Alhambra: still he came not. The winter passed away. Again the genial spring burst forth with song, and blossoms, and balmy zephyr; the snows melted from the mountains, until none remained, but on the lofty summit of the Nevada, glistening through the sultry summer air: still nothing was heard of the forgetful page.

In the mean time, the poor little Jacinta grew pale and thoughtful. Her former occupations and amusements were abandoned; her silk lay entangled, her guitar unstrung, her flowers were neglected, the notes of her bird unheeded, and her eyes, once so bright, were dimmed with secret weeping. If any solitude could be devised to foster the passion of a love-lorn damsel, it would be such a place as the Alhambra, where every thing seems disposed to produce tender and romantic reveries. It is a very Paradise for lovers; how hard then to be alone in such a Paradise; and not merely alone, but forsaken.

"Alas, silly child!" would the staid and immaculate Fredegonda say, when she found her niece in one of her desponding moods, "did I not warn thee against the wiles and deceptions of these men? What couldst thou expect, too, from one of a haughty and aspiring family, thou, an orphan, the descendant of a fallen and impoverished line; be assured, if the youth were true, his father, who is one of the proudest nobles about the court, would prohibit his union with one so humble and

portionless as thou. Pluck up thy resolution, therefore, and drive these idle notions from thy mind."

The words of the immaculate Fredegonda only served to increase the melancholy of her niece, but she sought to indulge it in private. At a late hour one midsummer night, after her aunt had retired to rest, she remained alone in the hall of the tower, seated beside the alabaster fountain. It was here that the faithless page had first knelt and kissed her hand, it was here that he had often vowed eternal fidelity. The poor little damsel's heart was overladen with sad and tender recollections, her tears began to flow, and slowly fell, drop by drop, into the fountain. By degrees the crystal water became agitated, and, bubble—bubble—bubble, boiled up, and was tossed about until a female figure, richly clad in Moorish robes, slowly rose to view.

Jacinta was so frightened, that she fled from the hall, and did not venture to return. The next morning, she related what she had seen to her aunt, but the good lady treated it as a fantasy of her troubled mind, or supposed she had fallen asleep and dreamt beside the fountain. "Thou hast been thinking of the story of the three Moorish princesses that once inhabited the tower," continued she, "and it has entered into thy dreams."

"What story, aunt? I know nothing of it."

"Thou hast certainly heard of the three princesses, Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda, who were confined in this tower by the king their father, and agreed to fly with three Christian cavaliers. The first two accomplished their escape, but the third failed in resolution and remained, and it is said died in this tower."

"I now recollect to have heard of it," said Jacinta, "and to have wept over the fate of the gentle Zorahayda."

"Thou mayst well weep over her fate," continued the aunt, "for the lover of Zorahayda was thy ancestor. He long bemoaned his Moorish love, but time cured him of his grief, and he married a Spanish lady, from whom thou art descended."

Jacinta ruminated upon these words. "That what I have seen is no fantasy of the brain," said she to herself, "I am confident. If indeed it be the sprite of the gentle Zorahayda, which I have heard lingers about this tower, of what should I be afraid? I'll watch by the fountain to-night, perhaps the visit will be repeated."

Towards midnight, when every thing was quiet, she again

took her seat in the hall. As the bell on the distant watch-tower of the Alhambra struck the midnight hour, the fountain was again agitated, and bubble—bubble—bubble, it tossed about the waters until the Moorish female again rose to view. She was young and beautiful; her dress was rich with jewels, and in her hand she held a silver lute. Jacinta trembled and was faint, but was reassured by the soft and plaintive voice of the apparition, and the sweet expression of her pale melancholy countenance.

“Daughter of Mortality,” said she, “what aileth thee? Why do thy tears trouble my fountain, and thy sighs and complaints disturb the quiet watches of the night?”

“I weep because of the faithlessness of man; and I bemoan my solitary and forsaken state.”

“Take comfort, thy sorrows may yet have an end. Thou beholdest a Moorish princess, who, like thee, was unhappy in her love. A Christian knight, thy ancestor, won my heart, and would have borne me to his native land, and to the bosom of his church. I was a convert in my heart, but I lacked courage equal to my faith, and lingered till too late. For this, the evil genii are permitted to have power over me, and I remain enchanted in this tower, until some pure Christian will deign to break the magic spell. Wilt thou undertake the task?”

“I will!” replied the damsel, trembling.

“Come hither, then, and fear not: dip thy hand in the fountain, sprinkle the water over me, and baptize me after the manner of thy faith; so shall the enchantment be dispelled, and my troubled spirit have repose.”

The damsel advanced with faltering steps, dipped her hand in the fountain, collected water in the palm, and sprinkled it over the pale face of the phantom.

The latter smiled with ineffable benignity. She dropped her silver lute at the feet of Jacinta, crossed her white arms upon her bosom, and melted from sight, so that it seemed merely as if a shower of dewdrops had fallen into the fountain.

Jacinta retired from the hall, filled with awe and wonder. She scarcely closed her eyes that night, but when she awoke at daybreak out of a troubled slumber, the whole appeared to her like a distempered dream. On descending into the hall, however, the truth of the vision was established; for, beside the fountain she beheld the silver lute glittering in the morning sunshine.

She hastened to her aunt, related all that had befallen her,

and called her to behold the lute as a testimonial of the reality of her story. If the good lady had any lingering doubts, they were removed when Jacinta touched the instrument, for she drew forth such ravishing tones as to thaw even the frigid bosom of the immaculate Fredegonda, that region of eternal winter, into a genial flow. Nothing but supernatural melody could have produced such an effect.

The extraordinary power of the lute became every day more and more apparent. The wayfarer passing by the tower was detained, and, as it were, spell-bound, in breathless ecstasy. The very birds gathered in the neighbouring trees, and, hushing their own strains, listened in charmed silence. Rumour soon spread the news abroad. The inhabitants of Granada thronged to the Alhambra, to catch a few notes of the transcendent music that floated about the tower of Las Infantas.

The lovely little minstrel was at length drawn forth from her retreat. The rich and powerful of the land contended who should entertain and do honour to her; or rather, who should secure the charms of her lute, to draw fashionable throngs to their saloons. Wherever she went, her vigilant aunt kept a dragon-watch at her elbow, awing the throngs of impassioned admirers who hung in raptures on her strains. The report of her wonderful powers spread from city to city: Malaga, Seville, Cordova, all became successively mad on the theme; nothing was talked of throughout Andalusia, but the beautiful minstrel of the Alhambra. How could it be otherwise among a people so musical and gallant as the Andalusians, when the lute was magical in its powers, and the minstrel inspired by love.

While all Andalusia was thus music-mad, a different mood prevailed at the court of Spain. Philip V., as is well known, was a miserable hypochondriac, and subject to all kinds of fancies. Sometimes he would keep to his bed for weeks together, groaning under imaginary complaints. At other times he would insist upon abdicating his throne, to the great annoyance of his royal spouse, who had a strong relish for the splendours of a court and the glories of a crown, and guided the sceptre of her imbecile lord with an expert and steady hand.

Nothing was found to be so efficacious in dispelling the royal megrims as the powers of music; the queen took care, therefore, to have the best performers, both vocal and

instrumental, at hand, and retained the famous Italian singer Farinelli about the court as a kind of royal physician.

At the moment we treat of, however, a freak had come over the mind of this sapient and illustrious Bourbon, that surpassed all former vagaries. After a long spell of imaginary illness, which set all the strains of Farinelli, and the consultations of a whole orchestra of court fiddlers, at defiance, the monarch fairly, in idea, gave up the ghost, and considered himself absolutely dead.

This would have been harmless enough, and even convenient both to his queen and courtiers, had he been content to remain in the quietude befitting a dead man; but, to their annoyance, he insisted upon having the funeral ceremonies performed over him, and, to their inexpressible perplexity, began to grow impatient, and to revile bitterly at them for negligence and disrespect in leaving him unburied. What was to be done? To disobey the king's positive commands was monstrous in the eyes of the obsequious courtiers of a punctilious court,—but to obey him, and bury him alive, would be downright regicide!

In the midst of this fearful dilemma, a rumour reached the court of the female minstrel, who was turning the brains of all Andalusia. The queen despatched missives in all haste, to summon her to St. Ildefonso, where the court at that time resided.

Within a few days, as the queen with her maids of honour was walking in those stately gardens, intended, with their avenues, and terraces, and fountains, to eclipse the glories of Versailles, the far-famed minstrel was conducted into her presence. The imperial Elizabetta gazed with surprise at the youthful and unpretending appearance of the little being that had set the world madding. She was in her picturesque Andalusian dress; her silver lute was in her hand, and she stood with modest and downcast eyes, but with a simplicity and freshness of beauty that still bespoke her "The Rose of the Alhambra."

As usual, she was accompanied by the ever vigilant Fredogonda, who gave the whole history of her parentage and descent to the inquiring queen. If the stately Elizabetta had been interested by the appearance of Jacinta, she was still more pleased when she learnt that she was of a meritorious, though impoverished line, and that her father had bravely fallen in the service of the crown. "If thy powers

equal their renown," said she, "and thou canst cast forth this evil spirit that possesses thy sovereign, thy fortune shall henceforth be my care, and honours and wealth attend thee."

Impatient to make trial of her skill, she led the way at once to the apartment of the moody monarch. Jacinta followed with downcast eyes through files of guards and crowds of courtiers. They arrived at length at a great chamber hung in black. The windows were closed, to exclude the light of day; a number of yellow wax tapers, in silver sconces, diffused a lugubrious light, and dimly revealed the figures of mutes in mourning dresses, and courtiers, who glided about with noiseless step and woe-begone visage. On the midst of a funeral bed or bier, his hands folded on his breast, and the tip of his nose just visible, lay extended this would-be-buried monarch.

The queen entered the chamber in silence, and, pointing to a footstool in an obscure corner, beckoned to Jacinta to sit down and commence.

At first she touched her lute with a faltering hand, but gathering confidence and animation as she proceeded, drew forth such soft, aerial harmony, that all present could scarce believe it mortal. As to the monarch, who had already considered himself in the world of spirits, he set it down for some angelic melody, or the music of the spheres. By degrees the theme was varied, and the voice of the minstrel accompanied the instrument. She poured forth one of the legendary ballads treating of the ancient glories of the Alhambra, and the achievements of the Moors. Her whole soul entered into the theme, for with the recollections of the Alhambra was associated the story of her love; the funereal chamber resounded with the animating strain. It entered into the gloomy heart of the monarch. He raised his head and gazed around; he sat up on his couch; his eye began to kindle; at length, leaping upon the floor, he called for sword and buckler.

The triumph of music, or rather of the enchanted lute, was complete; the demon of melancholy was cast forth; and, as it were, a dead man brought to life. The windows of the apartment were thrown open; the glorious effulgence of Spanish sunshine burst into the late lugubrious chamber; all eyes sought the lovely enchantress, but the lute had fallen from her hand; she had sunk upon the earth, and the next moment was clasped to the bosom of Ruyz de Alarcon.

The nuptials of the happy couple were shortly after celebrated with great splendour,—but hold, I hear the reader ask how did

Ruyz de Alarcon account for his long neglect? Oh,—that was all owing to the opposition of a proud pragmatistical old father,—besides, young people, who really like one another, soon come to an amicable understanding, and bury all past grievances whenever they meet.

But how was the proud pragmatistical old father reconciled to the match?

Oh, his scruples were easily overruled by a word or two from the queen,—especially as dignities and rewards were showered upon the blooming favourite of royalty. Besides, the lute of Jacinta, you know, possessed a magic power, and could control the most stubborn head and hardest heart.

And what became of the enchanted lute?

Oh, that is the most curious matter of all, and plainly proves the truth of all the story. That lute remained for some time in the family, but was purloined and carried off, as was supposed, by the great singer Farinelli, in pure jealousy. At his death it passed into other hands in Italy, who were ignorant of its mystic powers, and melting down the silver, transferred the strings to an old Cremona fiddle. The strings still retain something of their magic virtues. A word in the reader's ear, but let it go no further,—that fiddle is now bewitching the whole world,—it is the fiddle of Paganini!

THE VETERAN.

AMONG the curious acquaintances I have made in my rambles about the fortress, is a brave and battered old Colonel of Invalids, who is nestled like a hawk in one of the Moorish towers. His history, which he is fond of telling, is a tissue of those adventures, mishaps, and vicissitudes that render the life of almost every Spaniard of note as varied and whimsical as the pages of Gil Blas.

He was in America at twelve years of age, and reckons among the most signal and fortunate events of his life, his having seen General Washington. Since then he has taken a part in all the wars of his country; he can speak experimentally of most of the prisons and dungeons of the Peninsula, has been lamed of one leg, crippled in his hand, and so cut up and carbonadoed, that he is a kind of walking monument of the troubles of Spain, on which there is a scar for every battle and

broil, as every year was notched upon the tree of Robinson Crusoe. The greatest misfortune of the brave old cavalier, however, appears to have been his having commanded at Malaga during a time of peril and confusion, and been made a general by the inhabitants to protect them from the invasion of the French.

This has entailed upon him a number of just claims upon government that I fear will employ him until his dying day in writing and printing petitions and memorials, to the great disquiet of his mind, exhaustion of his purse, and penance of his friends; not one of whom can visit him without having to listen to a mortal document of half an hour in length, and to carry away half a dozen pamphlets in his pocket. This, however, is the case throughout Spain: every where you meet with some worthy wight brooding in a corner, and nursing up some pet grievance and cherished wrong. Beside, a Spaniard who has a lawsuit, or a claim upon government, may be considered as furnished with employment for the remainder of his life.

I visited the veteran in his quarters in the upper part of the *Terre del Vino*, or Wine Tower. His room was small but snug, and commanded a beautiful view of the Vega. It was arranged with a soldier's precision. Three muskets and a brace of pistols, all bright and shining, were suspended against the wall, with a sabre and a cane hanging side by side, and above these two cocked hats, one for parade, and one for ordinary use. A small shelf, containing some half dozen books, formed his library, one of which, a little old mouldy volume of philosophical maxims, was his favourite reading. This he thumbed and pondered over day by day; applying every maxim to his own particular case, provided it had a little tinge of wholesome bitterness, and treated of the injustice of the world.

Yet he is social and kind-hearted, and, provided he can be diverted from his wrongs and his philosophy, is an entertaining companion. I like these old weather-beaten sons of fortune, and enjoy their rough campaigning anecdotes. In the course of my visit to the one in question, I learnt some curious facts about an old military commander of the fortress, who seems to have resembled him in some respects, and to have had similar fortunes in the wars. These particulars have been augmented by inquiries among some of the old inhabitants of the place, particularly the father of Mateo Ximenes, of whose traditional stories the worthy I am about to introduce to the reader is a favourite hero.

THE GOVERNOR AND THE NOTARY.

In former times there ruled, as governor of the Alhambra, a doughty old cavalier, who, from having lost one arm in the wars, was commonly known by the name of El Gobernador Manco, or the one-armed governor. He in fact prided himself upon being an old soldier, wore his mustachios curled up to his eyes, a pair of campaigning boots, and a toledo as long as a spit, with his pocket handkerchief in the basket-hilt.

He was, moreover, exceedingly proud and punctilious, and tenacious of all his privileges and dignities. Under his sway, the immunities of the Alhambra, as a royal residence and domain, were rigidly exacted. No one was permitted to enter the fortress with fire-arms, or even with a sword or staff, unless he were of a certain rank, and every horseman was obliged to dismount at the gate and lead his horse by the bridle. Now, as the hill of the Alhambra rises from the very midst of the city of Granada, being, as it were, an excrescence of the capital, it must at all times be somewhat irksome to the captain-general who commands the province, to have thus an imperium in imperio, a petty independent post, in the very core of his domains. It was rendered the more galling in the present instance, from the irritable jealousy of the old governor, that took fire on the least question of authority and jurisdiction, and from the loose vagrant character of the people that had gradually nestled themselves within the fortress as in a sanctuary, and from thence carried on a system of roguery and depredation at the expense of the honest inhabitants of the city. Thus there was a perpetual feud and heart-burning between the captain-general and the governor; the more virulent on the part of the latter, inasmuch as the smallest of two neighbouring potentates is always the most captious about his dignity. The stately palace of the captain-general stood in the Plaza Nueva, immediately at the foot of the hill of the Alhambra, and here was always a bustle and parade of guards, and domestics, and city functionaries. A beetling bastion of the fortress overlooked the palace and the public square in front of it; and on this bastion the old governor would occasionally strut backwards and forwards, with his toledo girded by his side, keeping

a wary eye down upon his rival, like a hawk reconnoitring his quarry from his nest in a dry tree.

Whenever he descended into the city, it was in grand parade, on horseback, surrounded by his guards, or in his state coach, an ancient and unwieldy Spanish edifice of carved timber and gilt leather, drawn by eight mules, with running footmen, outriders, and lacqueys, on which occasions he flattered himself he impressed every beholder with awe and admiration as vicegerent of the king, though the wits of Granada, particularly those who loitered about the palace of the captain-general, were apt to sneer at his petty parade, and, in allusion to the vagrant character of his subjects, to greet him with the appellation of "the King of the beggars."

One of the most fruitful sources of dispute between these two doughty rivals, was the right claimed by the governor to have all things passed free of duty through the city, that were intended for the use of himself or his garrison. By degrees, this privilege had given rise to extensive smuggling. A nest of contrabandistas took up their abode in the hovels of the fortress and the numerous caves in its vicinity, and drove a thriving business under the connivance of the soldiers of the garrison.

The vigilance of the captain-general was aroused. He consulted his legal adviser and factotum, a shrewd, meddlesome Escribano or notary, who rejoiced in an opportunity of perplexing the old potentate of the Alhambra, and involving him in a maze of legal subtilities. He advised the captain-general to insist upon the right of examining every convoy passing through the gates of his city, and he penned a long letter for him, in vindication of the right. Governor Manco was a straight-forward, cut-and-thrust old soldier, who hated an Escribano worse than the devil, and this one in particular, worse than all other Escribanoes.

"What!" said he, curling up his mustachios fiercely, "does the captain-general set his man of the pen to practise confusions upon me? I'll let him see that an old soldier is not to be baffled by schoolcraft."

He seized his pen, and scrawled a short letter in a crabbed hand, in which, without deigning to enter into argument, he insisted on the right of transit free of search, and denounced vengeance on any custom-house officer who should lay his unhallowed hand on any convoy protected by the flag of the Alhambra.

While this question was agitated between the two pragmatic potentates, it so happened that a mule laden with supplies for the fortress arrived one day at the gate of Xenil, by which it was to traverse a suburb of the city on its way to the Alhambra. The convoy was headed by a testy old corporal, who had long served under the governor, and was a man after his own heart; as trusty and staunch as an old toledo blade. As they approached the gate of the city, the corporal placed the banner of the Alhambra on the pack saddle of the mule, and, drawing himself up to a perfect perpendicular, advanced with his head dressed to the front, but with the wary side glance of a cur passing through hostile grounds, and ready for a snap and a snarl.

"Who goes there?" said the sentinel at the gate.

"Soldier of the Alhambra," said the corporal, without turning his head.

"What have you in charge?"

"Provisions for the garrison."

"Proceed."

The corporal marched straight forward, followed by the convoy, but had not advanced many paces, before a possé of custom-house officer rushed out of a small toll-house.

"Hallo there!" cried the leader: "Muleteer, halt and open those packages."

The corporal wheeled round, and drew himself up in battle array. "Respect the flag of the Alhambra," said he; "these things are for the governor."

"A fig for the governor, and a fig for his flag. Muleteer, halt, I say."

"Stop the convoy at your peril!" cried the corporal, cocking his musket. "Muleteer, proceed."

The muleteer gave his beast a hearty thwack, the custom-house officer sprang forward, and seized the halter; whereupon the corporal levelled his piece and shot him dead.

The street was immediately in an uproar. The old corporal was seized, and after undergoing sundry kicks and cuffs, and cudgellings, which are generally given impromptu, by the mob in Spain, as a foretaste of the after penalties of the law, he was loaded with irons, and conducted to the city prison; while his comrades were permitted to proceed with the convoy, after it had been well rummaged, to the Alhambra.

The old governor was in a towering passion, when he heard of this insult to his flag and capture of his corporal. For a

time he stormed about the Moorish halls, and vapoured about the bastions, and looked down fire and sword upon the palace of the captain-general. Having vented the first ebullition of his wrath, he despatched a message demanding the surrender of the corporal, as to him alone belonged the right of sitting in judgment on the offences of those under his command. The captain-general, aided by the pen of the delighted Escribano, replied at great length, arguing that as the offence had been committed within the walls of his city, and against one of his civil officers, it was clearly within his proper jurisdiction. The governor rejoined by a repetition of his demand; the captain general gave a sur-rejoinder of still greater length, and legal acumen; the governor became hotter and more peremptory in his demands, and the captain-general cooler and more copious in his replies; until the old lion-hearted soldier absolutely roared with fury, at being thus entangled in the meshes of legal controversy.

While the subtle Escribano was thus amusing himself at the expense of the governor, he was conducting the trial of the corporal; who, mewed up in a narrow dungeon of the prison, had merely a small grated window at which to show his iron-bound visage, and receive the consolations of his friends; a mountain of written testimony was diligently heaped up, according to Spanish form, by the indefatigable Escribano; the corporal was completely overwhelmed by it. He was convicted of murder, and sentenced to be hanged.

It was in vain the governor sent down remonstrance and menace from the Alhambra. The fatal day was at hand, and the corporal was put *in capilla*, that is to say, in the chapel of the prison; as is always done with culprits the day before execution, that they may meditate on their approaching end, and repent them of their sins.

Seeing things drawing to an extremity, the old governor determined to attend to the affair in person. For this purpose he ordered out his carriage of state, and, surrounded by his guards, rumbled down the avenue of the Alhambra into the city. Driving to the house of the Escribano, he summoned him to the portal.

The eye of the old governor gleamed like a coal at beholding the smirking man of the law advancing with an air of exultation.

"What is this I hear," cried he, "that you are about to put to death one of my soldiers?"

"All according to law,—all in strict form of justice," said the self-sufficient Escribano, chuckling and rubbing his hands. "I can show your excellency the written testimony in the case."

"Fetch it hither," said the governor.

The Escribano bustled into his office, delighted with having another opportunity of displaying his ingenuity at the expense of the hard-headed veteran. He returned with a satchel full of papers, and began to read a long deposition with professional volubility. By this time, a crowd had collected, listening with outstretched necks and gaping mouths.

"Pry'thee man, get into the carriage out of this pestilent throng, that I may the better hear thee," said the governor.

The Escribano entered the carriage, when, in a twinkling, the door was closed, the coachman smacked his whip, mules, carriage, guards, and all dashed off at a thundering rate, leaving the crowd in gaping wonderment, nor did the governor pause until he had lodged his prey in one of the strongest dungeons of the Alhambra.

He then sent down a flag of truce in military style, proposing a cartel or exchange of prisoners, the corporal for the notary. The pride of the captain-general was piqued, he returned a contemptuous refusal, and forthwith caused a gallows, tall and strong, to be erected in the centre of the Plaza Neuva, for the execution of the corporal.

"O ho! is that the game?" said Governor Manco: he gave orders, and immediately a gibbet was reared on the verge of the great beetling bastion that overlooked the Plaza. "Now," said he, in a message to the captain-general, "hang my soldier when you please; but at the same time that he is swung off in the square, look up to see your Escribano dangling against the sky."

The captain-general was inflexible; troops were paraded in the square; the drums beat; the bell tolled; an immense multitude of amateurs had collected to behold the execution; on the other hand, the governor paraded his garrison on the bastion, and tolled the funeral dirge of the notary from the Torre de la Campana, or tower of the bell.

The notary's wife pressed through the crowd with a whole progeny of little embryo Escribanoes at her heels, and throwing herself at the feet of the captain-general, implored him not to sacrifice the life of her husband, and the welfare of herself and her numerous little ones to a point of pride; "for you

know the old governor too well," said she, "to doubt that he will put his threat in execution if you hang the soldier."

The captain-general was overpowered by her tears and lamentations, and the clamours of her callow brood. The corporal was sent up to the Alhambra under a guard, in his gallows garb, like a hooded friar; but with head erect and a face of iron. The Escribano was demanded in exchange, according to the cartel. The once bustling and self-sufficient man of the law was drawn forth from his dungeon, more dead than alive. All his flippancy and conceit had evaporated; his hair, it is said, had nearly turned gray with affright, and he had a down-cast, dogged look, as if he still felt the halter round his neck.

The old governor stuck his one arm a-kimbo, and for a moment surveyed him with an iron smile. "Henceforth, my friend," said he, "moderate your zeal in hurrying others to the gallows; be not too certain of your own safety, even though you should have the law on your side; and, above all, take care how you play off your schoolcraft another time upon an old soldier."

GOVERNOR MANCO AND THE SOLDIER.

WHEN Governor Manco, or the one-armed, kept up a show of military state in the Alhambra, he became nettled at the reproaches continually cast upon his fortress of being a nestling place of rogues and contrabandistas. On a sudden, the old potentate determined on reform, and setting vigorously to work, ejected whole nests of vagabonds out of the fortress, and the gypsy caves with which the surrounding hills are honey-combed. He sent out soldiers, also, to patrol the avenues and footpaths, with orders to take up all suspicious persons.

One bright summer morning, a patrol consisting of the testy old corporal who had distinguished himself in the affair of the notary, a trumpeter and two privates were seated under the garden wall of the Generaliffe, beside the road which leads down from the mountain of the Sun, when they heard the tramp of a horse, and a male voice singing in rough, though not unmusical tones, an old Castilian campaigning song.

Presently they beheld a sturdy, sun-burnt fellow clad in the

ragged garb of a foot-soldier, leading a powerful Arabian horse caparisoned in the ancient Morisco fashion.

Astonished at the sight of a strange soldier, descending, steed in hand, from that solitary mountain, the corporal stepped forth and challenged him.

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Who, and what are you?"

"A poor soldier, just from the wars, with a cracked crown and empty purse for a reward."

By this time they were enabled to view him more narrowly. He had a black patch across his forehead, which, with a grizzled beard, added to a certain dare-devil cast of countenance, while a slight squint threw into the whole an occasional gleam of roguish good-humour.

Having answered the questions of the patrol, the soldier seemed to consider himself entitled to make others in return.

"May I ask," said he, "what city is this which I see at the foot of the hill?"

"What city!" cried the trumpeter; "come, that's too bad. Here's a fellow lurking about the mountain of the Sun, and demands the name of the great city of Granada."

"Granada! Madre de Dios! can it be possible!"

"Perhaps not!" rejoined the trumpeter, "and perhaps you have no idea that yonder are the towers of the Alhambra?"

"Son of a trumpet," replied the stranger, "do not trifle with me; if this be indeed the Alhambra, I have some strange matters to reveal to the governor."

"You will have an opportunity," said the corporal, "for we mean to take you before him."

By this time the trumpeter had seized the bridle of the steed, the two privates had each secured an arm of the soldier, the corporal put himself in front, gave the word, "forward, march!" and away they marched for the Alhambra.

The sight of a ragged foot-soldier and a fine Arabian horse brought in captive by the patrol, attracted the attention of all the idlers of the fortress, and of those gossip groups that generally assemble about wells and fountains at early dawn. The wheel of the cistern paused in its rotations; the slipshod servant-maid stood gaping with pitcher in hand, as the corporal passed by with his prize. A motley train gradually gathered in the rear of the escort. Knowing nods, and winks, and conjectures passed from one to another. It is a deserter, said

one; a contrabandista, said another; a bandalero, said a third, until it was affirmed that a captain of a desperate band of robbers had been captured by the prowess of the corporal and his patrol. "Well, well," said the old crones one to another, "captain or not, let him get out of the grasp of old Governor Manco if he can, though he is but one-handed."

Governor Manco was seated in one of the inner halls of the Alhambra, taking his morning's cup of chocolate in company with his confessor, a fat Franciscan friar from the neighbouring convent. A demure, dark-eyed damsel of Malaga, the daughter of his housekeeper, was attending upon him.

The world hinted that the damsel, who, with all her demureness, was a sly, buxom baggage, had found out a soft spot in the iron heart of the old governor, and held complete control over him,—but let that pass; the domestic affairs of these mighty potentates of the earth should not be too narrowly scrutinized.

When word was brought that a suspicious stranger had been taken lurking about the fortress, and was actually in the outer court, in durance of the corporal, waiting the pleasure of his excellency, the pride and stateliness of office swelled the bosom of the governor. Giving back his chocolate cup into the hands of the demure damsel, he called for his basket-hilted sword, girded it to his side, twirled up his mustachios, took his seat in a large high-backed chair, assumed a bitter and forbidding aspect, and ordered the prisoner into his presence. The soldier was brought in, still closely pinioned by his captors, and guarded by the corporal. He maintained, however, a resolute, self-confident air, and returned the sharp, scrutinizing look of the governor with an easy squint, which by no means pleased the punctilious old potentate.

"Well, culprit!" said the governor, after he had regarded him for a moment in silence, "what have you to say for yourself? who are you?"

"A soldier, just from the wars, who has brought away nothing but scars and bruises."

"A soldier? humph! a foot-soldier by your garb. I understand you have a fine Arabian horse. I presume you brought him too from the wars, beside your scars and bruises."

"May it please your excellency, I have something strange to tell about that horse. Indeed, I have one of the most wonderful things to relate—something too that concerns the security of this fortress, indeed, of all Granada. But it is a matter

to be imparted only to your private ear, or in presence of such only as are in your confidence."

The governor considered for a moment, and then directed the corporal and his men to withdraw, but to post themselves outside of the door, and be ready at call. "This holy friar," said he, "is my confessor, you may say anything in his presence—and this damsel," nodding towards the handmaid, who had loitered with an air of great curiosity, "this damsel is of great secrecy and discretion, and to be trusted with any thing."

The soldier gave a glance between a squint and a leer at the demure handmaid. "I am perfectly willing," said he, "that the damsel should remain."

When all the rest had withdrawn, the soldier commenced his story. He was a fluent, smooth-tongued varlet, and had a command of language above his apparent rank.

"May it please your excellency," said he, "I am, as I before observed, a soldier, and have seen some hard service, but my term of enlistment being expired, I was discharged not long since from the army at Valladolid, and set out on foot for my native village in Andalusia. Yesterday evening the sun went down as I was traversing a great dry plain of old Castile."

"Hold!" cried the governor, "what is this you say? Old Castile is some two or three hundred miles from this."

"Even so," replied the soldier, coolly, "I told your excellency I had strange things to relate—but not more strange than true—as your excellency will find, if you will deign me a patient hearing."

"Proceed, culprit," said the governor, twirling up his mustachios.

"As the sun went down," continued the soldier, "I cast my eyes about in search of some quarters for the night, but far as my sight could reach, there were no signs of habitation. I saw that I should have to make my bed on the naked plain, with my knapsack for a pillow; but your excellency is an old soldier, and knows that to one who has been in the wars, such a night's lodging is no great hardship."

The governor nodded assent, as he drew his pocket-handkerchief out of the basket-hilt of his sword, to drive away a fly that buzzed about his nose.

"Well, to make a long story short," continued the soldier, "I trudged forward for several miles, until I came to a bridge over a deep ravine, through which ran a little thread of water, almost dried up by the summer heat. At one end of the bridge

was a Moorish tower, the upper part all in ruins, but a vault in the foundations quite entire. Here, thinks I, is a good place to make a halt. So I went down to the stream, took a hearty drink, for the water was pure and sweet, and I was parched with thirst, then opening my wallet, I took out an onion and a few crusts, which were all my provisions, and seating myself on a stone on the margin of the stream, began to make my supper; intending afterwards to quarter myself for the night in the vault of the tower, and capital quarters they would have been for a campaigner just from the wars, as your excellency, who is an old soldier, may suppose."

"I have put up gladly with worse in my time," said the governor, returning his pocket-handkerchief into the hilt of his sword.

"While I was quietly crunching my crust," pursued the soldier, "I heard something stir within the vault; I listened: it was the tramp of a horse. By and by a man came forth from a door in the foundation of the tower, close by the water's edge, leading a powerful horse by the bridle. I could not well make out what he was by the starlight. It had a suspicious look to be lurking among the ruins of a tower in that wild solitary place. He might be a mere wayfarer like myself; he might be a contrabandista; he might be a bandalero! What of that,—thank heaven and my poverty, I had nothing to lose,—so I sat still and crunched my crusts.

"He led his horse to the water close by where I was sitting, so that I had a fair opportunity of reconnoitring him. To my surprise, he was dressed in a Moorish garb, with a cuirass of steel, and a polished skullcap, that I distinguished by the reflection of the stars upon it. His horse, too, was harnessed in the Morisco fashion, with great shovel stirrups. He led him, as I said, to the side of the stream, into which the animal plunged his head almost to the eyes, and drank until I thought he would have burst.

"'Comrade,' said I, 'your steed drinks well; it's a good sign when a horse plunges his muzzle bravely into the water.'

"'He may well drink,' said the stranger, speaking with a Moorish accent; 'it is a good year since he had his last draught.'

"'By Santiago,' said I, 'that beats even the camels that I have seen in Africa. But come, you seem to be something of a soldier, won't you sit down, and take part of a soldier's fare?'—In fact, I felt the want of a companion in this lonely place,

and was willing to put up with an infidel. Besides, as your excellency well knows, a soldier is never very particular about the faith of his company, and soldiers of all countries are comrades on peaceable ground."

The governor again nodded assent.

"Well, as I was saying, I invited him to share my supper, such as it was, for I could not do less in common hospitality.

"'I have no time to pause for meat or drink,' said he, 'I have a long journey to make before morning.'

"'In which direction?' said I.

"'Andalusia,' said he.

"'Exactly my route,' said I. 'So as you won't stop and eat with me, perhaps you'll let me mount and ride with you. I see your horse is of a powerful frame: I'll warrant he'll carry double.'

"'Agreed,' said the trooper; and it would not have been civil and soldierlike to refuse, especially as I had offered to share my supper with him. So up he mounted, and up I mounted behind him.

"'Hold fast,' said he, 'my steed goes like the wind.'

"'Never fear me,' said I, and so off we set.

"From a walk the horse soon passed to a trot, from a trot to a gallop, and from a gallop to a harum-scarum scamper. It seemed as if rocks, trees, houses, everything, flew hurry-scurry behind us.

"'What town is this?' said I.

"'Segovia,' said he; and before the words were out of his mouth, the towers of Segovia were out of sight. We swept up the Guadarama mountains, and down by the Escorial; and we skirted the walls of Madrid, and we scoured away across the plains of La Mancha. In this way we went up hill and down dale, by towns and cities all buried in deep sleep, and across mountains, and plains, and rivers, just glimmering in the star light.

"To make a long story short, and not to fatigue your excellency, the trooper suddenly pulled up on the side of a mountain. 'Here we are,' said he, 'at the end of our journey.'

"I looked about but could see no signs of habitation: nothing but the mouth of a cavern: while I looked, I saw multitudes of people in Moorish dresses, some on horseback, some on foot, arriving as if borne by the wind from all points of the compass, and hurrying into the mouth of the cavern like bees into a hive. Before I could ask a question, the trooper struck his

long Moorish spurs into the horse's flanks, and dashed in with the throng. We passed along a steep winding way that descended into the very bowels of the mountain. As we pushed on, a light began to glimmer up by little and little, like the first glimmerings of day, but what caused it, I could not discover. It grew stronger and stronger, and enabled me to see everything around. I now noticed as we passed along, great caverns opening to the right and left, like halls in an arsenal. In some there were shields, and helmets, and cuirasses, and lances, and scimitars hanging against the walls; in others, there were great heaps of warlike munitions and camp equipage lying upon the ground.

"It would have done your excellency's heart good, being an old soldier, to have seen such grand provision for war. Then in other caverns there were long rows of horsemen, armed to the teeth, with lances raised and banners unfurled, all ready for the field; but they all sat motionless in their saddles like so many statues. In other halls, were warriors sleeping on the ground beside their horses, and foot soldiers in groups, ready to fall into the ranks. All were in old-fashioned Moorish dresses and armour.

"Well, your excellency, to cut a long story short, we at length entered an immense cavern, or I might say palace, of grotto work, the walls of which seemed to be veined with gold and silver, and to sparkle with diamonds and sapphires, and all kinds of precious stones. At the upper end sat a Moorish king on a golden throne, with his nobles on each side, and a guard of African blacks with drawn scimitars. All the crowd that continued to flock in, and amounted to thousands and thousands, passed one by one before his throne, each paying homage as he passed. Some of the multitude were dressed in magnificent robes, without stain or blemish, and sparkling with jewels; others in burnished and enamelled armour; while others were in mouldered and mildewed garments, and in armour all battered and dented, and covered with rust.

"I had hitherto held my tongue, for your excellency well knows, it is not for a soldier to ask many questions when on duty, but I could keep silence no longer.

"'Pr'ythee, comrade,' said I, 'what is the meaning of all this?'

"'This,' said the trooper, 'is a great and powerful mystery. Know, O Christian, that you see before you the court and army of Boabdil, the last king of Granada.'

“ ‘What is this you tell me!’ cried I. ‘Boabdil and his court were exiled from the land hundreds of years ago, and all died in Africa.’

“ ‘So it is recorded in your lying chronicles,’ replied the Moor, ‘but know that Boabdil and the warriors who made the last struggle for Granada were all shut up in this mountain by powerful enchantment. As to the king and army that marched forth from Granada at the time of the surrender, they were a mere phantom train, or spirits and demons permitted to assume those shapes to deceive the Christian sovereigns. And furthermore let me tell you, friend, that all Spain is a country under the power of enchantment. There is not a mountain-cave, not a lonely watch-tower in the plains, nor ruined castle on the hills, but has some spell-bound warriors sleeping from age to age within its vaults, until the sins are expiated for which Allah permitted the dominion to pass for a time out of the hands of the faithful. Once every year, on the eve of St. John, they are released from enchantment from sunset to sunrise, and permitted to repair here to pay homage to their sovereign; and the crowds which you beheld swarming into the cavern are Moslem warriors from their haunts in all parts of Spain; for my own part, you saw the ruined tower of the bridge in old Castile, where I have now wintered and summered for many hundred years, and where I must be back again by day-break. As to the battalions of horse and foot which you beheld drawn up in array in the neighbouring caverns, they are the spell-bound warriors of Granada. It is written in the book of fate, that when the enchantment is broken, Boabdil will descend from the mountains at the head of this army, resume his throne in the Alhambra and his sway of Granada, and gathering together the enchanted warriors from all parts of Spain, will reconquer the peninsula, and restore it to Moslem rule.’

“ ‘And when shall this happen?’ said I.

“ ‘Allah alone knows. We had hoped the day of deliverance was at hand; but there reigns at present a vigilant governor in Alhambra, a staunch old soldier, the same called Governor Manco; while such a warrior holds command of the very outpost, and stands ready to check the first irruption from the mountain, I fear Boabdil and his soldiery must be content to rest upon their arms.’”

Here the governor raised himself somewhat perpendicularly, adjusted his sword, and twirled up his mustachios.

"To make a long story short, and not to fatigue your excellency, the trooper having given me this account, dismounted from his steed.

" 'Tarry here,' said he, 'and guard my steed, while I go and bow the knee to Boabdil.' So saying, he strode away among the throng that pressed forward to the throne.

"What's to be done? thought I, when thus left to myself. Shall I wait here until this infidel returns to whisk me off on his goblin steed, the Lord knows where? or shall I make the most of my time, and beat a retreat from this hobgoblin community?—A soldier's mind is soon made up, as your excellency well knows. As to the horse, he belonged to an avowed enemy of the faith and the realm, and was a fair prize according to the rules of war. So hoisting myself from the crupper into the saddle, I turned the reins, struck the Moorish stirrups into the sides of the steed, and put him to make the best of his way out of the passage by which we had entered. As we scoured by the halls where the Moslem horsemen sat in motionless battalions, I thought I heard the clang of armour, and a hollow murmur of voices. I gave the steed another taste of the stirrups, and doubled my speed. There was now a sound behind me like a rushing blast; I heard the clatter of a thousand hoofs; a countless throng overtook me; I was borne along in the press, and hurled forth from the mouth of the cavern, while thousands of shadowy forms were swept off in every direction by the four winds of heaven.

"In the whirl and confusion of the scene, I was thrown from the saddle, and fell senseless to the earth. When I came to myself I was lying on the brow of a hill, with the Arabian steed standing beside me, for in falling my arm had slipped within the bridle, which, I presume, prevented his whisking off to old Castile.

"Your excellency may easily judge of my surprise on looking round, to behold hedges of aloes and Indian figs, and other proofs of a southern climate, and see a great city below me with towers and palaces, and a grand cathedral. I descended the hill cautiously, leading my steed, for I was afraid to mount him again, lest he should play me some slippery trick. As I descended, I met with your patrol, who let me into the secret that it was Granada that lay before me: and that I was actually under the walls of the Alhambra, the fortress of the redoubted Governor Manco, the terror of all enchanted Moslems. When I heard this, I determined at once to seek your

excellency, to inform you of all that I had seen, and to warn you of the perils that surround and undermine you, that you may take measures in time to guard your fortress, and the kingdom itself, from this intestine army that lurks in the very bowels of the land."

"And prythee, friend, you who are a veteran campaigner, and have seen so much service," said the governor, "how would you advise me to go about to prevent this evil?"

"It is not for an humble private of the ranks," said the soldier modestly, "to pretend to instruct a commander of your excellency's sagacity; but it appears to me that your excellency might cause all the caves and entrances into the mountain to be walled up with solid mason-work, so that Boabdil and his army might be completely corked up in their subterranean habitation. If the good father too," added the soldier, reverently bowing to the friar, and devoutly crossing himself, "would consecrate the barricadoes with his blessing, and put up a few crosses and reliques, and images of saints, I think they might withstand all the power of infidel enchantments."

"They doubtless would be of great avail," said the friar.

The governor now placed his arm a-kimbo, with his hand resting on the hilt of his toledo, fixed his eye upon the soldier, and gently wagging his head from one side to the other:

"So, friend," said he, "then you really suppose I am to be gulled with this cock-and-bull story about enchanted mountains, and enchanted Moors. Hark ye, culprit!—not another word.—An old soldier you may be, but you'll find you have an old soldier to deal with; and one not easily outgeneralled. Ho! guard there!—put this fellow in irons."

The demure handmaid would have put in a word in favour of the prisoner, but the governor silenced her with a look.

As they were pinioning the soldier, one of the guards felt something of bulk in his pocket, and drawing it forth, found a long leathern purse that appeared to be well filled. Holding it by one corner, he turned out the contents on the table before the governor, and never did freebooter's bag make more gorgeous delivery. Out tumbled rings and jewels, and rosaries of pearls, and sparkling diamond crosses, and a profusion of ancient golden coin, some of which fell jingling to the floor, and rolled away to the uttermost parts of the chamber.

For a time the functions of justice were suspended: there was a universal scramble after the glittering fugitives. The

governor alone, who was imbued with true Spanish pride, maintained his stately decorum, though his eye betrayed a little anxiety until the last coin and jewel was restored to the sack.

The friar was not so calm; his whole face glowed like a furnace, and his eyes twinkled and flashed at sight of the rosaries and crosses.

"Sacrilegious wretch that thou art," exclaimed he, "what church or sanctuary hast thou been plundering of these sacred reliques?"

"Neither one nor the other, holy father. If they be sacrilegious spoils, they must have been taken in times long past by the infidel trooper I have mentioned. I was just going to tell his excellency, when he interrupted me, that, on taking possession of the trooper's horse, I unhooked a leathern sack which hung at the saddle bow, and which, I presume, contained the plunder of his campaignings in days of old, when the Moors overran the country."

"Mighty well,—at present you will make up your mind to take up your quarters in a chamber of the Vermilion towers, which, though not under a magic spell, will hold you as safe as any cave of your enchanted Moors."

"Your excellency will do as you think proper," said the prisoner coolly. "I shall be thankful to your excellency for any accommodation in the fortress. A soldier who has been in the wars, as your excellency well knows, is not particular about his lodgings; and provided I have a snug dungeon and regular rations, I shall manage to make myself comfortable. I would only entreat, that while your excellency is so careful about me, you would have an eye to your fortress, and think on the hint I dropped about stopping up the entrances to the mountain."

Here ended the scene. The prisoner was conducted to a strong dungeon in the Vermilion towers, the Arabian steed was led to his excellency's stable, and the trooper's sack was deposited in his excellency's strong box. To the latter, it is true, the friar made some demur, questioning whether the sacred reliques, which were evidently sacrilegious spoils, should not be placed in custody of the church; but as the governor was peremptory on the subject, and was absolute lord in the Alhambra, the friar discreetly dropped the discussion, but determined to convey intelligence of the fact to the church dignitaries in Granada.

To explain these prompt and rigid measures on the part of old Governor Manco, it is proper to observe, that about this time the Alpuxarra mountains in the neighbourhood of Granada were terribly infected by a gang of robbers, under the command of a daring chief named Manuel Borasco, who were accustomed to prowl about the country, and even to enter the city in various disguises to gain intelligence of the departure of convoys of merchandise, or travellers with well-lined purses, whom they took care to waylay in distant and solitary passes of their road. These repeated and daring outrages had awakened the attention of government, and the commanders of the various posts had received instructions to be on the alert, and to take up all suspicious stragglers. Governor Manco was particularly zealous, in consequence of the various stigmas that had been cast upon his fortress, and he now doubted not that he had entrapped some formidable desperado of this gang.

In the mean time the story took wind, and became the talk not merely of the fortress, but of the whole city of Granada. It was said that the noted robber, Manuel Borasco, the terror of the Alpuxarras, had fallen into the clutches of old Governor Manco, and been cooped up by him in a dungeon of the Vermilion towers, and every one who had been robbed by him flocked to recognize the marauder. The Vermilion towers, as is well known, stand apart from the Alhambra, on a sister hill separated from the main fortress by the ravine, down which passes the main avenue. There were no outer walls, but a sentinel patrolled before the tower. The window of the chamber in which the soldier was confined was strongly grated, and looked upon a small esplanade. Here the good folks of Granada repaired to gaze at him, as they would at a laughing hyena grinning through the cage of a menagerie. Nobody, however, recognized him for Manuel Borasco, for that terrible robber was noted for a ferocious physiognomy, and had by no means the good-humoured squint of the prisoner. Visitors came not merely from the city, but from all parts of the country, but nobody knew him, and there began to be doubts in the minds of the common people, whether there might not be some truth in his story. That Boabdil and his army were shut up in the mountain, was an old tradition which many of the ancient inhabitants had heard from their fathers. Numbers went up to the mountain of the Sun, or rather of St. Elena, in search of the cave mentioned by the soldier; and saw and peeped into the deep dark pit, descending, no one knows how far, into the

mountain, and which remains there to this day, the fabled entrance to the subterranean abode of Boabdil.

By degrees, the soldier became popular with the common people. A freebooter of the mountains is by no means the opprobrious character in Spain that a robber is in any other country; on the contrary, he is a kind of chivalrous personage in the eyes of the lower classes. There is always a disposition, also, to cavil at the conduct of those in command, and many began to murmur at the high-handed measures of old Governor Manco, and to look upon the prisoner in the light of a martyr.

The soldier, moreover, was a merry, waggish fellow, that had a joke for every one who came near his window, and a soft speech for every female. He had procured an old guitar also, and would sit by his window and sing ballads and love-ditties to the delight of the women of the neighbourhood, who would assemble on the esplanade in the evenings, and dance boleros to his music. Having trimmed off his rough beard, his sunburnt face found favour in the eyes of the fair, and the demure handmaid of the governor declared that his squint was perfectly irresistible. This kind-hearted damsel had, from the first, evinced a deep sympathy in his fortunes, and having in vain tried to mollify the governor, had set to work privately to mitigate the rigour of his dispensations. Every day she brought the prisoner some crumbs of comfort which had fallen from the governor's table, or been abstracted from his larder, together with, now and then, a consoling bottle of choice Val de Peñas, or rich Malaga.

While this petty treason was going on in the very centre of the old governor's citadel, a storm of open war was brewing up among his external foes. The circumstance of a bag of gold and jewels having been found upon the person of the supposed robber, had been reported with many exaggerations in Granada. A question of territorial jurisdiction was immediately started by the governor's inveterate rival, the captain-general. He insisted that the prisoner had been captured without the precincts of the Alhambra, and within the rules of his authority. He demanded his body, therefore, and the spolia opima taken with him. Due information having been carried likewise by the friar to the grand Inquisitor, of the crosses, and the rosaries, and other reliques contained in the bag, he claimed the culprit, as having been guilty of sacrilege, and insisted that his plunder was due to the church, and his body to the next Auto da Fe. The feuds ran high; the governor was furious, and

swore, rather than surrender his captive, he would hang him up within the Alhambra, as a spy caught within the purlieus of the fortress.

The captain-general threatened to send a body of soldiers to transfer the prisoner from the Vermilion towers to the city. The grand Inquisitor was equally bent upon despatching a number of the familiars of the holy office. Word was brought late at night to the governor, of these machinations. "Let them come," said he, "they'll find me beforehand with them. He must rise bright and early who would take in an old soldier." He accordingly issued orders to have the prisoner removed at daybreak to the Donjon Keep within the walls of the Alhambra: "And d'ye hear, child," said he to his demure handmaid, "tap at my door, and wake me before cock-crowing, that I may see to the matter myself."

The day dawned, the cock crowed, but nobody tapped at the door of the governor. The sun rose high above the mountaintops, and glittered in at his casement ere the governor was awakened from his morning dreams by his veteran corporal, who stood before him with terror stamped upon his iron visage.

"He's off! he's gone!" cried the corporal, gasping for breath.

"Who's off?—who's gone?"

"The soldier—the robber—the devil, for aught I know. His dungeon is empty, but the door locked. No one knows how he has escaped out of it."

"Who saw him last?"

"Your handmaid,—she brought him his supper."

"Let her be called instantly."

Here was new matter of confusion. The chamber of the demure damsel was likewise empty; her bed had not been slept in; she had doubtless gone off with the culprit, as she had appeared, for some days past, to have frequent conversations with him.

This was wounding the old governor in a tender part, but he had scarce time to wince at it, when new misfortunes broke upon his view. On going into his cabinet, he found his strong box open, the leathern purse of the trooper extracted, and with it a couple of corpulent bags of doubloons.

But how, and which way had the fugitives escaped? A peasant who lived in a cottage by the road-side leading up into the Sierra, declared that he had heard the tramp of a powerful steed, just before daybreak, passing up into the

mountains. He had looked out at his casement, and could just distinguish a horseman, with a female seated before him.

"Search the stables," cried Governor Manco. The stables were searched; all the horses were in their stalls, excepting the Arabian steed. In his place was a stout cudgel tied to the manger, and on it a label bearing these words, "A gift to Governor Manco, from an old soldier."

LEGEND OF THE TWO DISCREET STATUES.

THERE lived once, in a waste apartment of the Alhambra, a merry little fellow named Lope Sanchez, who worked in the gardens, and was as brisk and blithe as a grasshopper, singing all day long. He was the life and soul of the fortress; when his work was over, he would sit on one of the stone benches of the esplanade and strum his guitar, and sing long ditties about the Cid, and Bernardo del Carpio, and Fernando del Pulgar, and other Spanish heroes, for the amusement of the old soldiers of the fortress, or would strike up a merrier tune, and set the girls dancing boleros and fandangos.

Like most little men, Lope Sanchez had a strapping buxom dame for a wife, who could almost have put him in her pocket; but he lacked the usual poor man's lot,—instead of ten children he had but one. This was a little black-eyed girl, about twelve years of age, named Sanchica, who was as merry as himself, and the delight of his heart. She played about him as he worked in the gardens, danced to his guitar as he sat in the shade, and ran as wild as a young fawn about the groves, and alleys, and ruined halls of the Alhambra.

It was now the eve of the blessed St. John, and the holyday-loving gossips of the Alhambra, men, women, and children, went up at night to the mountain of the Sun, which rises above the Generaliffe, to keep their midsummer vigil on its level summit. It was a bright moonlight night, and all the mountains were gray and silvery, and the city, with its domes and spires, lay in shadows below, and the Vega was like a fairy land, with haunted streams gleaming among its dusky groves. On the highest part of the mountain they lit up a bale fire, according to an old custom of the country handed down from the Moors. The inhabitants of the surrounding

country were keeping a similar vigil, and bale fires here and there in the Vega, and along the folds of the mountains, blazed up palely in the moonlight.

The evening was gaily passed in dancing to the guitar of Lope Sanchez, who was never so joyous as when on a holiday revel of the kind. While the dance was going on, the little Sanchica with some of her playmates sported among the ruins of an old Moorish fort that crowns the mountain, when, in gathering pebbles in the fosse, she found a small hand, curiously carved of jet, the fingers closed, and the thumb firmly clasped upon them. Overjoyed with her good fortune, she ran to her mother with her prize. It immediately became a subject of sage speculation, and was eyed by some with superstitious distrust. "Throw it away," said one, "it is Moorish,—depend upon it there's mischief and witchcraft in it." "By no means," said another, "you may sell it for something to the jeweller of the Zacatin." In the midst of this discussion an old tawny soldier drew near, who had served in Africa, and was as swarthy as a Moor. He examined the hand with a knowing look. "I have seen things of this kind," said he, "among the Moors of Barbary. It is of great value to guard against the evil eye, and all kinds of spells and enchantments. I give you joy, friend Lope, this bodes good luck to your child."

Upon hearing this, the wife of Lope Sanchez tied the little hand of jet to a riband, and hung it round the neck of her daughter.

The sight of this talisman called up all the favourite superstitions about the Moors. The dance was neglected, and they sat in groups on the ground, telling old legendary tales handed down from their ancestors. Some of their stories turned upon the wonders of the very mountain upon which they were seated, which is a famous hobgoblin region.

One ancient crone gave a long account of the subterranean palace in the bowels of that mountain, where Boabdil and all his Moslem court are said to remain enchanted. "Among yonder ruins," said she, pointing to some crumbling walls and mounds of earth on a distant part of the mountain, "there is a deep black pit that goes down, down into the very heart of the mountain. For all the money in Granada, I would not look down into it. Once upon a time, a poor man of the Alhambra, who tended goats upon this mountain, scrambled down into that pit after a kid that had fallen in. He came out

again, all wild and staring, and told such things of what he had seen, that every one thought his brain was turned. He raved for a day or two about hobgoblin Moors that had pursued him in the cavern, and could hardly be persuaded to drive his goats up again to the mountain. He did so at last, but, poor man, he never came down again. The neighbours found his goats browsing about the Moorish ruins, and his hat and mantle lying near the mouth of the pit, but he was never more heard of."

The little Sanchica listened with breathless attention to this story. She was of a curious nature, and felt immediately a great hankering to peep into this dangerous pit. Stealing away from her companions, she sought the distant ruins, and after groping for some time among them, came to a small hollow or basin, near the brow of the mountain, where it swept steeply down into the valley of the Darro. In the centre of this basin yawned the mouth of the pit. Sanchica ventured to the verge and peeped in. All was black as pitch, and gave an idea of immeasurable depth. Her blood ran cold—she drew back—then peeped again—then would have run away—then took another peep—the very horror of the thing was delightful to her. At length she rolled a large stone, and pushed it over the brink. For some time it fell in silence; then struck some rocky projection with a violent crash, then rebounded from side to side, rumbling and tumbling, with a noise like thunder, then made a final splash into water, far, far below, and all was again silent.

The silence, however, did not long continue. It seemed as if something had been awakened within this dreary abyss. A murmuring sound gradually rose out of the pit like the hum and buzz of a bee-hive. It grew louder and louder; there was the confusion of voices as of a distant multitude, together with the faint din of arms, clash of cymbals, and clangour of trumpets, as if some army were marshalling for battle in the very bowels of the mountain.

The child drew off with silent awe, and hastened back to the place where she had left her parents and their companions. All were gone. The bale fire was expiring, and its last wreath of smoke curling up in the moonshine. The distant fires that had blazed along the mountains and in the Vega were all extinguished; every thing seemed to have sunk to repose. Sanchica called her parents and some of her companions by name, but received no reply. She ran down the side of the mountain,

and by the gardens of the Generaliffe, until she arrived in the alley of trees leading to the Alhambra, where she seated herself on a bench of a woody recess to recover breath. The bell from the watch-tower of the Alhambra told midnight. There was a deep tranquillity, as if all nature slept; excepting the low tinkling sound of an unseen stream that ran under the covert of the bushes. The breathing sweetness of the atmosphere was lulling her to sleep, when her eye was caught by something glittering at a distance, and to her surprise, she beheld a long cavalcade of Moorish warriors pouring down the mountain side, and along the leafy avenues. Some were armed with lances and shields; others with scimitars and battle-axes, and with polished cuirasses that flashed in the moon-beams. Their horses pranced proudly, and champed upon the bit, but their tramp caused no more sound than if they had been shod with felt, and the riders were all as pale as death. Among them rode a beautiful lady with a crowned head and long golden locks entwined with pearls. The housings of her palfrey were of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and swept the earth; but she rode all disconsolate, with eyes ever fixed upon the ground.

Then succeeded a train of courtiers magnificently arrayed in robes and turbans of divers colours, and amidst these, on a cream-coloured charger, rode king Boabdil el Chico, in a royal mantle covered with jewels, and a crown sparkling with diamonds. The little Sanchica knew him by his yellow beard, and his resemblance to his portrait, which she had often seen in the picture gallery of the Generaliffe. She gazed in wonder and admiration at this royal pageant as it passed glistening among the trees, but though she knew these monarchs, and courtiers, and warriors, so pale and silent, were out of the common course of nature, and things of magic or enchantment, yet she looked on with a bold heart, such courage did she derive from the mystic talisman of the hand which was suspended about her neck.

The cavalcade having passed by, she rose and followed. It continued on to the great gate of Justice, which stood wide open; the old invalid sentinels on duty, lay on the stone benches of the Barbican, buried in profound and apparently charmed sleep, and the phantom pageant swept noiselessly by them with flaunting banner and triumphant state. Sanchica would have followed, but, to her surprise, she beheld an opening in the earth within the Barbican, leading down beneath

the foundations of the tower. She entered for a little distance, and was encouraged to proceed by finding steps rudely hewn in the rock, and a vaulted passage here and there lit up by a silver lamp, which, while it gave light, diffused likewise a grateful fragrance. Venturing on, she came at last to a great hall wrought out of the heart of the mountain, magnificently furnished in the Moorish style, and lighted up by silver and crystal lamps. Here on an ottoman sat an old man in Moorish dress, with a long white beard, nodding and dozing, with a staff in his hand, which seemed ever to be slipping from his grasp; while at a little distance, sat a beautiful lady in ancient Spanish dress, with a coronet all sparkling with diamonds, and her hair entwined with pearls, who was softly playing on a silver lyre. The little Sanchica now recollected a story she had heard among the old people of the Alhambra, concerning a Gothic princess confined in the centre of the mountain by an old Arabian magician, whom she kept bound up in magic sleep by the power of music.

The lady paused with surprise, at seeing a mortal in that enchanted hall. "Is it the eve of the blessed St. John?" said she.

"It is," replied Sanchica.

"Then for one night the magic charm is suspended. Come hither, child, and fear not, I am a Christian like thyself, though bound here by enchantment. Touch my fetters with the talisman that hangs about thy neck, and for this night I shall be free."

So saying, she opened her robes and displayed a broad golden band round her waist, and a golden chain that fastened her to the ground. The child hesitated not to apply the little hand of jet to the golden band, and immediately the chain fell to the earth. At the sound the old man awoke, and began to rub his eyes, but the lady ran her fingers over the chords of the lyre, and again he fell into a slumber and began to nod, and his staff to falter in his hand. "Now," said the lady, "touch his staff with the talismanic hand of jet." The child did so, and it fell from his grasp, and he sank in a deep sleep on the ottoman. The lady gently laid the silver lyre on the ottoman leaning it against the head of the sleeping magician, then touching the chords until they vibrated in his ear, "O potent spirit of harmony," said she, "continue thus to hold his senses in thralldom till the return of day." "Now follow me, my child," continued she, "and thou shalt behold the Alhambra as

it was in the days of its glory, for thou hast a magic talisman that reveals all enchantments." Sanchica followed the lady in silence. They passed up through the entrance of the cavern into the Barbican of the gate of Justice, and thence to the Plaza de las Algibes, or esplanade within the fortress. This was all filled with Moorish soldiery, horse and foot, marshalled in squadrons, with banners displayed. There were royal guards also at the portal, and rows of African blacks with drawn scimitars. No one spoke a word, and Sanchica passed on fearlessly after her conductor. Her astonishment increased on entering the royal palace, in which she had been reared. The broad moonshine lit up all the halls, and courts, and gardens, almost as brightly as if it were day; but revealed a far different scene from that to which she was accustomed. The walls of the apartments were no longer stained and rent by time. Instead of cobwebs, they were now hung with rich silks of Damascus, and the gildings and arabesque paintings were restored to their original brilliancy and freshness. The halls, instead of being naked and unfurnished, were set out with divans and ottomans of the rarest stuffs, embroidered with pearls, and studded with precious gems, and all the fountains in the courts and gardens were playing.

The kitchens were again in full operation; cooks were busied preparing shadowy dishes, and roasting and boiling the phantoms of pullets and partridges; servants were hurrying to and fro with silver dishes heaped up with dainties, and arranging a delicious banquet. The Court of Lions was thronged with guards, and courtiers, and alfaquis, as in the old times of the Moors; and at the upper end in the saloon of judgment, sat Boabdil on his throne, surrounded by his court, and swaying a shadowy sceptre for the night.

Notwithstanding all this throng and seeming bustle, not a voice or footstep was to be heard; nothing interrupted the midnight silence but the plashing of the fountains. The little Sanchica followed her conductress in mute amazement about the palace, until they came to a portal opening to the vaulted passages beneath the great tower of Comares. On each side of the portal sat the figure of a nymph, wrought out of alabaster. Their heads were turned aside, and their regards fixed upon the same spot within the vault. The enchanted lady paused, and beckoned the child to her. "Here," said she, "is a great secret, which I will reveal to thee in reward for thy faith and courage. These discreet statues watch over a mighty treasure

hidden in old times by a Moorish king. Tell thy father to search the spot on which their eyes are fixed, and he will find what will make him richer than any man in Granada. Thy innocent hands alone, however, gifted as thou art also with the talisman, can remove the treasure. Bid thy father use it discreetly, and devote a part of it to the performance of daily masses for my deliverance from this unholy enchantment."

When the lady had spoken these words, she led the child onward to the little garden of Lindaraxa, which is hard by the vault of the statues. The moon trembled upon the waters of the solitary fountain in the centre of the garden, and shed a tender light upon the orange and citron trees. The beautiful lady plucked a branch of myrtle and wreathed it round the head of the child. "Let this be a memento," said she, "of what I have revealed to thee, and a testimonial of its truth. My hour is come.—I must return to the enchanted hall; follow me not, lest evil befall thee; farewell, remember what I have said, and have masses performed for my deliverance." So saying, the lady entered a dark passage leading beneath the towers of Comares, and was no longer to be seen.

The faint crowing of a cock was now heard from the cottages below the Alhambra, in the valley of the Darro, and a pale streak of light began to appear above the eastern mountains. A slight wind arose; there was a sound like the rustling of dry leaves through the courts and corridors, and door after door shut to with a jarring sound. Sanchica returned to the scenes she had so lately beheld thronged with the shadowy multitude, but Boabdil and his phantom court were gone.

The moon shone into empty halls and galleries, stripped of their transient splendour, stained and dilapidated by time, and hung with cobwebs; the bat flitted about in the uncertain light, and the frog croaked from the fish-pond.

Sanchica now made the best of her way to a remote staircase that led up to the humble apartment occupied by her family. The door as usual was open, for Lope Sanchez was too poor to need bolt or bar: she crept quietly to her pallet, and, putting the myrtle wreath beneath her pillow, soon fell asleep.

In the morning she related all that had befallen her to her father. Lope Sanchez, however, treated the whole as a mere dream, and laughed at the child for her credulity. He went forth to his customary labours in the garden, but had not been there long when his little daughter came running to him almost

breathless. "Father! father!" cried she, "behold the myrtle wreath which the Moorish lady bound round my head."

Lope Sanchez gazed with astonishment, for the stalk of the myrtle was of pure gold, and every leaf was a sparkling emerald! Being not much accustomed to precious stones, he was ignorant of the real value of the wreath, but he saw enough to convince him that it was something more substantial than the stuff that dreams are generally made of, and that at any rate the child had dreamt to some purpose. His first care was to enjoin the most absolute secrecy upon his daughter; in this respect, however, he was secure, for she had discretion far beyond her years or sex. He then repaired to the vault where stood the statues of the two alabaster nymphs. He remarked that their heads were turned from the portal, and that the regards of each were fixed upon the same point in the interior of the building. Lope Sanchez could not but admire this most discreet contrivance for guarding a secret. He drew a line from the eyes of the statues to the point of regard, made a private mark on the wall, and then retired.

All day, however, the mind of Lope Sanchez was distracted with a thousand cares. He could not help hovering within distant view of the two statues, and became nervous from the dread that the golden secret might be discovered. Every footstep that approached the place, made him tremble. He would have given any thing could he but turn the heads of the statues, forgetting that they had looked precisely in the same direction for some hundreds of years, without any person being the wiser. "A plague upon them," he would say to himself, "they'll betray all. Did ever mortal hear of such a mode of guarding a secret!" Then, on hearing any one advance, he would steal off, as though his very lurking near the place would awaken suspicions. Then he would return cautiously, and peep from a distance to see if every thing was secure, but the sight of the statues would again call forth his indignation. "Aye, there they stand," would he say, "always looking, and looking, and looking, just where they should not. Confound them! they are just like all their sex; if they have not tongues to tattle with, they'll be sure to do it with their eyes!"

At length, to his relief, the long anxious day drew to a close. The sound of footsteps was no longer heard in the echoing halls of the Alhambra; the last stranger passed the threshold, the great portal was barred and bolted, and the bat, and the

frog, and the hooting owl gradually resumed their nightly vocations in the deserted palace.

Lope Sanchez waited, however, until the night was far advanced, before he ventured with his little daughter to the hall of the two nymphs. He found them looking as knowingly and mysteriously as ever, at the secret place of deposit. "By your leaves, gentle ladies," thought Lope Sanchez as he passed between them, "I will relieve you from this charge that must have set so heavy in your minds for the last two or three centuries." He accordingly went to work at the part of the wall which he had marked, and in a little while laid open a concealed recess, in which stood two great jars of porcelain. He attempted to draw them forth, but they were immovable until touched by the innocent hand of his little daughter. With her aid he dislodged them from their niche, and found to his great joy, that they were filled with pieces of Moorish gold, mingled with jewels and precious stones. Before daylight he managed to convey them to his chamber, and left the two guardian statues with their eyes still fixed on the vacant wall.

Lope Sanchez had thus on a sudden become a rich man, but riches, as usual, brought a world of cares, to which he had hitherto been a stranger. How was he to convey away his wealth with safety? How was he even to enter upon the enjoyment of it without awakening suspicion? Now too, for the first time in his life, the dread of robbers entered into his mind. He looked with terror at the insecurity of his habitation, and went to work to barricade the doors and windows; yet after all his precautions, he could not sleep soundly. His usual gaiety was at an end; he had no longer a joke or a song for his neighbours, and, in short, became the most miserable animal in the Alhambra. His old comrades remarked this alteration; pitied him heartily, and began to desert him, thinking he must be falling into want, and in danger of looking to them for assistance; little did they suspect that his only calamity was riches.

The wife of Lope Sanchez shared his anxiety; but then she had ghostly comfort. We ought before this to have mentioned, that Lope being rather a light, inconsiderate little man, his wife was accustomed, in all grave matters, to seek the counsel and ministry of her confessor, Fray Simon, a sturdy, broad-shouldered, blue-bearded, bullet-headed friar of the neighbouring convent of San Francisco, who was, in fact, the spiritual comforter of half the good wives of the neighbour-

hood. He was, moreover, in great esteem among divers sisterhoods of nuns, who requited him for his ghostly services by frequent presents of those little dainties and nicknacks manufactured in convents, such as delicate confections, sweet biscuits, and bottles of spiced cordials, found to be marvellous restoratives after fasts and vigils.

Fray Simon thrived in the exercise of his functions. His oily skin glistened in the sunshine as he toiled up the hill of the Alhambra on a sultry day. Yet notwithstanding his sleek condition, the knotted rope round his waist showed the austerity of his self-discipline; the multitude doffed their caps to him as a mirror of piety, and even the dogs scented the odour of sanctity that exhaled from his garments, and howled from their kennels as he passed.

Such was Fray Simon, the spiritual counsellor of the comely wife of Lope Sanchez, and as the father confessor is the domestic confidant of women in humble life in Spain, he was soon made acquainted, in great secrecy, with the story of the hidden treasure.

The friar opened eyes and mouth, and crossed himself a dozen times at the news. After a moment's pause, "Daughter of my soul!" said he, "know that thy husband has committed a double sin, a sin against both state and church! The treasure he has thus seized upon for himself, being found in the royal domains, belongs of course to the crown; but being infidel wealth, rescued, as it were, from the very fangs of Satan, should be devoted to the church. Still, however, the matter may be accommodated. Bring hither the myrtle wreath."

When the good father beheld it, his eyes twinkled more than ever, with admiration of the size and beauty of the emeralds. "This," said he, "being the first fruits of this discovery, should be dedicated to pious purposes. I will hang it up as a votive offering before the image of San Francisco in our chapel, and will earnestly pray to him, this very night, that your husband be permitted to remain in quiet possession of your wealth."

The good dame was delighted to make her peace with heaven at so cheap a rate, and the friar, putting the wreath under his mantle, departed with saintly steps towards his convent.

When Lope Sanchez came home, his wife told him what had passed. He was excessively provoked, for he lacked his wife's devotion, and had for some time groaned in secret at the

domestic visitations of the friar. "Woman," said he, "what hast thou done! Thou hast put every thing at hazard by thy tattling."

"What!" cried the good woman, "would you forbid my disburthening my conscience to my confessor?"

"No, wife! confess as many of your own sins as you please; but as to this money-digging, it is a sin of my own, and my conscience is very easy under the weight of it."

There was no use, however, in complaining; the secret was told, and, like water spilled on the sand, was not again to be gathered. Their only chance was, that the friar would be discreet.

The next day, while Lope Sanchez was abroad, there was an humble knocking at the door, and Fray Simon entered with meek and demure countenance.

"Daughter," said he, "I have prayed earnestly to San Francisco, and he has heard my prayer. In the dead of the night the saint appeared to me in a dream, but with a frowning aspect. "Why," said he, "dost thou pray to me to dispense with this treasure of the Gentiles, when thou seest the poverty of my chapel? Go to the house of Lope Sanchez, crave in my name a portion of the Moorish gold to furnish two candlesticks for the main altar, and let him possess the residue in peace."

When the good woman heard of this vision, she crossed herself with awe, and going to the secret place where Lope had hid the treasure, she filled a great leathern purse with pieces of Moorish gold, and gave it to the friar. The pious monk bestowed upon her in return, benedictions enough, if paid by heaven, to enrich her race to the latest posterity; then slipping the purse into the sleeve of his habit, he folded his hands upon his breast, and departed with an air of humble thankfulness.

When Lope Sanchez heard of this second donation to the church, he had well nigh lost his senses. "Unfortunate man," cried he, "what will become of me? I shall be robbed by piecemeal; I shall be ruined and brought to beggary!"

It was with the utmost difficulty that his wife could pacify him by reminding him of the countless wealth that yet remained; and how considerate it was for San Francisco to rest contented with so very small a portion.

Unluckily, Fray Simon had a number of poor relations to be provided for, not to mention some half dozen sturdy bullet-

headed orphan children and destitute foundlings, that he had taken under his care. He repeated his visits, therefore, from day to day, with salutations on behalf of Saint Dominick, Saint Andrew, Saint James, until poor Lope was driven to despair, and found that, unless he got out of the reach of this holy friar, he should have to make peace offerings to every saint in the kalendar. He determined, therefore, to pack up his remaining wealth, beat a secret retreat in the night, and make off to another part of the kingdom.

Full of his project, he bought a stout mule for the purpose, and tethered it in a gloomy vault, underneath the tower of the Seven Floors. The very place from whence the Bellado, or goblin horse without a head, is said to issue forth at midnight and to scour the streets of Granada, pursued by a pack of hell-hounds. Lope Sanchez had little faith in the story, but availed himself of the dread occasioned by it, knowing that no one would be likely to pry into the subterranean stable of the phantom steed. He sent off his family in the course of the day, with orders to wait for him at a distant village of the Vega. As the night advanced, he conveyed his treasure to the vault under the tower, and having loaded his mule, he led it forth, and cautiously descended the dusky avenue.

Honest Lope had taken his measures with the utmost secrecy, imparting them to no one but the faithful wife of his bosom. By some miraculous revelation, however, they became known to Fray Simon; the zealous friar beheld these infidel treasures on the point of slipping for ever out of his grasp, and determined to have one more dash at them for the benefit of the church and San Francisco. Accordingly, when the bells had rung for animas, and all the Alhambra was quiet, he stole out of his convent, and, descending through the gate of Justice, concealed himself among the thickets of roses and laurels that border the great avenue. Here he remained, counting the quarters of hours as they were sounded on the bell of the watch-tower, and listening to the dreary hootings of owls, and the distant barking of dogs from the gipsy caverns.

At length, he heard the tramp of hoofs, and, through the gloom of the overshadowing trees, imperfectly beheld a steed descending the avenue. The sturdy friar chuckled at the idea of the knowing turn he was about to serve honest Lope. Tucking up the skirts of his habit, and wriggling like a cat watching a mouse, he waited until his prey was directly before him, when darting forth from his leafy covert, and putting one hand

on the shoulder, and the other on the crupper, he made a vault that would not have disgraced the most experienced master of equitation, and alighted well forked astride the steed. "Aha!" said the sturdy friar, "we shall now see who best understands the game."

He had scarce uttered the words, when the mule began to kick and rear and plunge, and then set off at full speed down the hill. The friar attempted to check him, but in vain. He bounded from rock to rock, and bush to bush; the friar's habit was torn to ribands, and fluttered in the wind; his shaven poll received many a hard knock from the branches of the trees, and many a scratch from the brambles. To add to his terror and distress, he found a pack of seven hounds in full cry at his heels, and perceived, too late, that he was actually mounted upon the terrible Bellado!

Away they went, according to the ancient phrase, "pull devil, pull friar," down the great avenue, across the Plaza Nueva, along the Zacatin, around the Vivarambla,—never did huntsman and hound make a more furious run, or more infernal uproar.

In vain did the friar invoke every saint in the kalendar, and the holy virgin into the bargain; every time he mentioned a name of the kind, it was like a fresh application of the spur, and made the Bellado bound as high as a house. Through the remainder of the night was the unlucky Fray Simon carried hither and thither and whither he would not, until every bone in his body ached, and he suffered a loss of leather too grievous to be mentioned. At length, the crowing of a cock gave the signal of returning day. At the sound, the goblin steed wheeled about, and galloped back for his tower. Again he scoured the Vivarambla, the Zacatin, the Plaza Nueva, and the avenue of fountains, the seven dogs yelling and barking, and leaping up, and snapping at the heels of the terrified friar. The first streak of day had just appeared as they reached the tower; here the goblin steed kicked up his heels, sent the friar a somerset through the air, plunged into the dark vault followed by the infernal pack, and a profound silence succeeded to the late deafening clamour.

Was ever so diabolical a trick played off upon holy friar? A peasant going to his labours at early dawn, found the unfortunate Fray Simon lying under a fig-tree at the foot of the tower, but so bruised and bedeviled, that he could neither speak nor move. He was conveyed with all care and tender-

ness to his cell, and the story went that he had been waylaid and maltreated by robbers. A day or two elapsed before he recovered the use of his limbs: he consoled himself in the mean time, with the thoughts that though the mule with the treasure had escaped him, he had previously had some rare pickings at the infidel spoils. His first care on being able to use his limbs, was to search beneath his pallet, where he had secreted the myrtle wreath and the leathern pouches of gold, extracted from the piety of dame Sanchez. What was his dismay at finding the wreath, in effect, but a withered branch of myrtle, and the leathern pouches filled with sand and gravel!

Fray Simon, with all his chagrin, had the discretion to hold his tongue, for to betray the secret might draw on him the ridicule of the public, and the punishment of his superior; it was not until many years afterwards, on his death-bed, that he revealed to his confessor his nocturnal ride on the Bellado.

Nothing was heard of Lope Sanchez for a long time after his disappearance from the Alhambra. His memory was always cherished as that of a merry companion, though it was feared, from the care and melancholy showed in his conduct shortly before his mysterious departure, that poverty and distress had driven him to some extremity. Some years afterwards, one of his old companions, an invalid soldier, being at Malaga, was knocked down and nearly run over by a coach and six. The carriage stopped; an old gentleman, magnificently dressed, with a bag-wig and sword, stepped out to assist the poor invalid. What was the astonishment of the latter to behold in this grand cavalier, his old friend Lope Sanchez, who was actually celebrating the marriage of his daughter Sanchica, with one of the first grandees in the land.

The carriage contained the bridal party. There was dame Sanchez now grown as round as a barrel, and dressed out with feathers and jewels, and necklaces of pearls, and necklaces of diamonds, and rings on every finger, and altogether a finery of apparel that had not been seen since the days of Queen Sheba. The little Sanchica had now grown to be a woman, and for grace and beauty might have been mistaken for a duchess, if not a princess outright. The bridegroom sat beside her, rather a withered, spindle-shanked little man, but this only proved him to be of the true blue blood, a legitimate Spanish grandee being rarely above three cubits in stature. The match had been of the mother's making.

Riches had not spoiled the heart of honest Lope. He kept

his old comrade with him for several days; feasted him like a king, took him to plays and bull-fights, and at length sent him away rejoicing, with a big bag of money for himself, and another to be distributed among his ancient messmates of the Alhambra.

Lope always gave out that a rich brother had died in America, and left him heir to a copper mine, but the shrewd gossips of the Alhambra insist that his wealth was all derived from his having discovered the secret guarded by the two marble nymphs of the Alhambra. It is remarked, that these very discreet statues continue even unto the present day with their eyes fixed most significantly on the same part of the wall, which leads many to suppose there is still some hidden treasure remaining there, well worthy the attention of the enterprising traveller. Though others, and particularly all female visitors, regard them with great complacency, as lasting monuments of the fact, that women can keep a secret.

MAHAMAD ABEN ALAHMAR:

THE FOUNDER OF THE ALHAMBRA.

HAVING dealt so freely in the marvellous legends of the Alhambra, I feel as if bound to give the reader a few facts concerning its sober history, or rather the history of those magnificent princes, its founder and finisher, to whom Europe is indebted for so beautiful and romantic an oriental monument. To attain these facts, I descended from this region of fancy and fiction, where everything is liable to take an imaginative tint, and carried my researches among the dusty tomes of the old Jesuit's library in the university. This once boasted repository of erudition is now a mere shadow of its former self, having been stripped of its manuscripts and rarest works by the French, while masters of Granada. Still it contains, among many ponderous tomes of polemics of the Jesuit fathers, several curious tracts of Spanish literature, and above all, a number of those antiquated, dusty, parchment-bound chronicles, for which I have a peculiar veneration.

In this old library I have passed many delightful hours of quiet, undisturbed, literary foraging, for the keys of the doors

and bookcases were kindly entrusted to me, and I was left alone to rummage at my leisure—a rare indulgence in those sanctuaries of learning, which too often tantalize the thirsty student with the sight of sealed fountains of knowledge.

In the course of these visits I gleaned the following particulars concerning the historical characters in question.

The Moors of Granada regarded the Alhambra as a miracle of art, and had a tradition that the king who founded it dealt in magic, or at least was deeply versed in alchymy, by means of which, he procured the immense sums of gold expended in its erection. A brief view of his reign will show the real secret of his wealth.

The name of this monarch, as inscribed on the walls of some of the apartments, was Aben Abd'allah (*i.e.* the father of Abdallah), but he is commonly known in Moorish history as Mahamad Aben Alahmar (or Mahamad son of Alahmar), or simply Aben Alahmar, for the sake of brevity.

He was born in Arjona, in the year of the Hegira, 591, of the Christian era, 1195, of the noble family of the Beni Nasar, or children of Nasar, and no expense was spared by his parents to fit him for the high station to which the opulence and dignity of his family entitled him. The Saracens of Spain were greatly advanced in civilization. Every principal city was a seat of learning and the arts, so that it was easy to command the most enlightened instructors for a youth of rank and fortune. Aben Alahmar, when he arrived at manly years, was appointed Alcayde or governor of Arjona and Jaen, and gained great popularity by his benignity and justice. Some years afterwards, on the death of Aben Hud, the Moorish power of Spain was broken into factions, and many places declared for Mahamad Aben Alahmar. Being of a sanguine spirit and lofty ambition, he seized upon the occasion, made a circuit through the country, and was every where received with acclamation. It was in the year 1238 that he entered Granada amidst the enthusiastic shouts of the multitude. He was proclaimed king with every demonstration of joy, and soon became the head of the Moslems in Spain, being the first of the illustrious line of Beni Nasar that had sat upon the throne.

His reign was such as to render him a blessing to his subjects. He gave the command of his various cities to such as had distinguished themselves by valour and prudence, and who seemed most acceptable to the people. He organized a

vigilant police, and established rigid rules for the administration of justice. The poor and the distressed always found ready admission to his presence, and he attended personally to their assistance and redress. He erected hospitals for the blind, the aged, and infirm, and all those incapable of labour, and visited them frequently, not on set days, with pomp and form, so as to give time for every thing to be put in order and every abuse concealed, but suddenly and unexpectedly, informing himself by actual observation and close inquiry of the treatment of the sick, and the conduct of those appointed to administer to their relief.

He founded schools and colleges, which he visited in the same manner, inspecting personally the instruction of the youth. He established butcheries and public ovens, that the people might be furnished with wholesome provisions at just and regular prices. He introduced abundant streams of water into the city, erecting baths and fountains, and constructing aqueducts and canals to irrigate and fertilize the Vega. By these means, prosperity and abundance prevailed in this beautiful city, its gates were thronged with commerce, and its warehouses filled with the luxuries and merchandize of every clime and country.

While Mahamad Aben Alahmar was ruling his fair domains thus wisely and prosperously, he was suddenly menaced by the horrors of war. The Christians at that time, profiting by the dismemberment of the Moslem power, were rapidly regaining their ancient territories. James the Conqueror had subjected all Valentia, and Ferdinand the Saint was carrying his victorious armies into Andalusia. The latter invested the city of Jaen, and swore not to raise his camp until he had gained possession of the place. Mahamad Aben Alahmar was conscious of the insufficiency of his means to carry on a war with the potent sovereign of Castile. Taking a sudden resolution, therefore, he repaired privately to the Christian camp, and made his unexpected appearance in the presence of king Ferdinand. "In me," said he, "you behold Mahamad, king of Granada. I confide in your good faith, and put myself under your protection. Take all I possess, and receive me as your vassal." So saying, he knelt and kissed the king's hand in token of submission.

King Ferdinand was touched by this instance of confiding faith, and determined not to be outdone in generosity. He raised his late rival from the earth and embraced him as a

friend, nor would he accept the wealth he offered, but received him as a vassal, leaving him sovereign of his dominions, on condition of paying a yearly tribute, attending the cortes as one of the nobles of the empire, and serving him in war with a certain number of horsemen.

It was not long after this that Mahamad was called upon for his military services, to aid king Ferdinand in his famous siege of Seville. The Moorish king sallied forth with five hundred chosen horsemen of Granada, than whom none in the world knew better how to manage the steed or wield the lance. It was a melancholy and humiliating service, however, for they had to draw the sword against their brethren of the faith. Mahamad gained a melancholy distinction by his prowess in this renowned conquest, but more true honour by the humanity which he prevailed upon Ferdinand to introduce into the usages of war. When in 1248, the famous city of Seville surrendered to the Castilian monarch, Mahamad returned sad and full of care to his dominions. He saw the gathering ills that menaced the Moslem cause, and uttered an ejaculation often used by him in moments of anxiety and trouble: "How straitened and wretched would be our life, if our hope were not so spacious and extensive."*

When the melancholy conqueror approached his beloved Granada, the people thronged forth to see him with impatient joy, for they loved him as a benefactor. They had erected arches of triumph in honour of his martial exploits, and wherever he passed he was hailed with acclamations, as *El Galib*, or the conqueror; Mahamad shook his head when he heard the appellation, "*Wa le Galib ilé Alá*," exclaimed he: (there is no conqueror but God!) From that time forward, he adopted this exclamation as a motto. He inscribed it on an oblique band across his escutcheon, and it continued to be the motto of his descendants.

Mahamad had purchased peace by submission to the Christian yoke, but he knew that where the elements were so discordant, and the motives for hostility so deep and ancient, it could not be secure or permanent. Acting therefore upon an old maxim, "arm thyself in peace, and clothe thyself in summer," he improved the present interval of tranquillity by fortifying his dominions and replenishing his arsenals, and by

* "Que angoste y miserable seria nuestra vida, sino fuera tan dilatada y espaciosa nuestra esperanza!"

promoting those useful arts which give wealth and real power to an empire. He gave premiums and privileges to the best artisans; improved the breed of horses and other domestic animals; encouraged husbandry; and increased the natural fertility of the soil twofold by his protection, making the lonely valleys of his kingdom to bloom like gardens. He fostered also the growth and fabrication of silk, until the looms of Granada surpassed even those of Syria in the fineness and beauty of their productions. He, moreover, caused the mines of gold and silver, and other metals found in the mountainous regions of his dominions, to be diligently worked, and was the first king of Granada who struck money of gold and silver with his name, taking great care that the coins should be skillfully executed.

It was about this time, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, and just after his return from the siege of Seville, that he commenced the splendid palace of the Alhambra: superintending the building of it in person, mingling frequently among the artists and workmen, and directing their labours.

Though thus magnificent in his works, and great in his enterprises, he was simple in his person, and moderate in his enjoyments. His dress was not merely void of splendour, but so plain as not to distinguish him from his subjects. His harem boasted but few beauties, and these he visited but seldom, though they were entertained with great magnificence. His wives were daughters of the principal nobles, and were treated by him as friends and rational companions; what is more, he managed to make them live as friends with one another.

He passed much of his time in his gardens; especially in those of the Alhambra, which he had stored with the rarest plants, and the most beautiful and aromatic flowers. Here he delighted himself in reading histories, or in causing them to be read and related to him; and sometimes, in intervals of leisure, employed himself in the instruction of his three sons, for whom he had provided the most learned and virtuous masters.

As he had frankly and voluntarily offered himself a tributary vassal to Ferdinand, so he always remained loyal to his word, giving him repeated proofs of fidelity and attachment. When that renowned monarch died in Seville, in 1254, Mahamad Aben Alahmar sent ambassadors to condole with his successor, Alonzo X., and with them a gallant train of a hundred Moorish cavaliers of distinguished rank, who were to attend, each bearing a lighted taper round the royal bier, during the funeral

ceremonies. This grand testimonial of respect was repeated by the Moslem monarch during the remainder of his life, on each anniversary of the death of King Fernando el Santo, when the hundred Moorish knights repaired from Granada to Seville, and took their stations with lighted tapers in the centre of the sumptuous cathedral round the cenotaph of the illustrious deceased.

Mahamad Aben Alahmar retained his faculties and vigour to an advanced age. In his seventy-ninth year he took the field on horseback, accompanied by the flower of his chivalry, to resist an invasion of his territories. As the army sallied forth from Granada, one of the principal adalides or guides, who rode in the advance, accidentally broke his lance against the arch of the gate. The counsellors of the king, alarmed by this circumstance, which was considered an evil omen, entreated him to return. Their supplications were in vain. The king persisted, and at noon-tide the omen, say the Moorish chroniclers, was fatally fulfilled. Mahamad was suddenly struck with illness, and had nearly fallen from his horse. He was placed on a litter, and borne back towards Granada, but his illness increased to such a degree, that they were obliged to pitch his tent in the Vega. His physicians were filled with consternation, not knowing what remedy to prescribe. In a few hours he died vomiting blood, and in violent convulsions. The Castilian prince, Don Philip, brother of Alonzo X., was by his side when he expired. His body was embalmed, enclosed in a silver coffin, and buried in the Alhambra, in a sepulchre of precious marble, amidst the unfeigned lamentations of his subjects, who bewailed him as a parent.

Such was the enlightened patriot prince, who founded the Alhambra, whose name remains emblazoned among its most delicate and graceful ornaments, and whose memory is calculated to inspire the loftiest associations in those who tread these fading scenes of his magnificence and glory. Though his undertakings were vast, and his expenditures immense, yet his treasury was always full; and this seeming contradiction gave rise to the story that he was versed in magic art and possessed of the secret for transmuting baser metals into gold.

Those who have attended to his domestic policy, as here set forth, will easily understand the natural magic and simple alchymy which made his ample treasury to overflow.

JUSEF ABUL HAGIAS:

THE FINISHER OF THE ALHAMBRA.

BENEATH the governor's apartment in the Alhambra is the royal Mosque, where the Moorish monarchs performed their private devotions. Though consecrated as a Catholic chapel, it still bears traces of its Moslem origin; the Saracenic columns with their gilded capitals, and the latticed gallery for the females of the harem, may yet be seen, and the escutcheons of the Moorish kings are mingled on the walls with those of the Castilian sovereigns.

In this consecrated place perished the illustrious Jusef Abul Hagias, the high-minded prince who completed the Alhambra, and who, for his virtues and endowments, deserves almost equal renown with its magnanimous founder. It is with pleasure I draw forth from the obscurity in which it has too long remained, the name of another of those princes of a departed and almost forgotten race, who reigned in elegance and splendour in Andalusia, when all Europe was in comparative barbarism.

Jusef Abul Hagias (or, as it is sometimes written, Haxis) ascended the throne of Granada in the year 1333, and his personal appearance and mental qualities were such as to win all hearts, and to awaken anticipations of a beneficent and prosperous reign. He was of a noble presence and great bodily strength, united to manly beauty. His complexion was exceeding fair, and, according to the Arabian chroniclers, he heightened the gravity and majesty of his appearance by suffering his beard to grow to a dignified length, and dyeing it black. He had an excellent memory, well stored with science and erudition; he was of a lively genius, and accounted the best poet of his time, and his manners were gentle, affable, and urbane.

Jusef possessed the courage common to all generous spirits, but his genius was more calculated for peace than war, and, though obliged to take up arms repeatedly in his time, he was generally unfortunate. He carried the benignity of his nature into warfare, prohibiting all wanton cruelty, and enjoining mercy and protection towards women and children, the aged

and infirm, and all friars and persons of holy and recluse life. Among other ill-starred enterprises, he undertook a great campaign in conjunction with the king of Morocco, against the kings of Castile and Portugal, but was defeated in the memorable battle of Salado; a disastrous reverse which had nearly proved a death blow to the Moslem power in Spain.

Jusef obtained a long truce after this defeat, during which time he devoted himself to the instruction of his people and the improvement of their morals and manners. For this purpose he established schools in all the villages, with simple and uniform systems of education; he obliged every hamlet of more than twelve houses to have a Mosque, and prohibited various abuses and indecorums, that had been introduced into the ceremonies of religion, and the festivals and public amusements of the people. He attended vigilantly to the police of the city, establishing nocturnal guards and patrols, and superintending all municipal concerns.

His attention was also directed towards finishing the great architectural works commenced by his predecessors, and erecting others on his own plans. The Alhambra, which had been founded by the good Aben Alahmar, was now completed. Jusef constructed the beautiful gate of Justice, forming the grand entrance to the fortress, which he finished in 1348. He likewise adorned many of the courts and halls of the palace, as may be seen by the inscriptions on the walls, in which his name repeatedly occurs. He built also the noble Alcazar, or citadel of Malaga; now unfortunately a mere mass of crumbling ruins, but which probably exhibited in its interior similar elegance and magnificence with the Alhambra.

The genius of a sovereign stamps a character upon his time. The nobles of Granada, imitating the elegant and graceful taste of Jusef, soon filled the city of Granada with magnificent palaces; the halls of which were paved in Mosaic, the walls and ceilings wrought in fret-work, and delicately gilded and painted with azure, vermilion, and other brilliant colours, or minutely inlaid with cedar and other precious woods; specimens of which have survived in all their lustre the lapse of several centuries.

Many of the houses had fountains, which threw up jets of water to refresh and cool the air. They had lofty towers also, of wood or stone, curiously carved and ornamented, and covered with plates of metal that glittered in the sun. Such was the refined and delicate taste in architecture that prevailed among this elegant people; insomuch, that to use the beautiful

simile of an Arabian writer, "Granada, in the days of Jusef, was as a silver vase filled with emeralds and jacinths."

One anecdote will be sufficient to show the magnanimity of this generous prince. The long truce which had succeeded the battle of Salado was at an end, and every effort of Jusef to renew it was in vain. His deadly foe, Alfonso XI. of Castile, took the field with great force, and laid siege to Gibraltar. Jusef reluctantly took up arms, and sent troops to the relief of the place; when, in the midst of his anxiety, he received tidings that his dreaded foe had suddenly fallen a victim to the plague. Instead of manifesting exultation on the occasion, Jusef called to mind the great qualities of the deceased, and was touched with a noble sorrow. "Alas!" cried he, "the world has lost one of its most excellent princes; a sovereign who knew how to honour merit, whether in friend or foe!"

The Spanish chroniclers themselves bear witness to this magnanimity. According to their accounts, the Moorish cavaliers partook of the sentiment of their king, and put on mourning for the death of Alfonso. Even those of Gibraltar, who had been so closely invested, when they knew that the hostile monarch lay dead in his camp, determined among themselves that no hostile movement should be made against the Christians.

The day on which the camp was broken up, and the army departed, bearing the corpse of Alfonso, the Moors issued in multitudes from Gibraltar, and stood mute and melancholy, watching the mournful pageant. The same reverence for the deceased was observed by all the Moorish commanders on the frontiers, who suffered the funeral train to pass in safety, bearing the corpse of the Christian sovereign from Gibraltar to Seville.*

Jusef did not long survive the enemy he had so generously deplored. In the year 1354, as he was one day praying in the royal mosque of the Alhambra, a maniac rushed suddenly from behind, and plunged a dagger in his side. The cries of the king brought his guards and courtiers to his assistance. They found him weltering in his blood, and in convulsions. He was borne to the royal apartments, but expired almost im-

* "Y los Moros que estaban en la villa y Castillo de Gibraltar despues que sopieron que el Rey Don Alonzo era muerto, ordenaron entresi que ninguno non fuesse osado de fazer ningun movimiento contra los Christianos, nin mover pelear contra ellos, estovieron todos quedos y dezian entre ellos que aquel dia muriera un noble rey y gran principe del mundo!"

mediately. The murderer was cut to pieces, and his limbs burnt in public, to gratify the fury of the populace.

The body of the king was interred in a superb sepulchre of white marble; a long epitaph in letters of gold upon an azure ground recorded his virtues. "Here lies a king and martyr of an illustrious line, gentle, learned and virtuous; renowned for the graces of his person and his manners; whose clemency, piety and benevolence were extolled throughout the kingdom of Granada. He was a great prince, an illustrious captain; a sharp sword of the Moslems; a valiant standard-bearer among the most potent monarchs," etc.

The mosque still remains, which once resounded with the dying cries of Jusef, but the monument which recorded his virtues has long since disappeared. His name, however, remains inscribed among the ornaments of the Alhambra, and will be perpetuated in connection with this renowned pile, which it was his pride and delight to beautify.

THE END.

THE
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INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH the following Chronicle bears the name of the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida, it is rather a superstructure reared upon the fragmants which remain of his work. It may be asked, Who is this same Agapida, who is cited with such deference, yet whose name is not to be found in any of the catalogues of Spanish authors? The question is hard to answer: he appears to have been one of the many indefatigable authors of Spain, who have filled the libraries of convents and cathedrals with their tomes, without ever dreaming of bringing their labors to the press. He evidently was deeply and accurately informed of the particulars of the wars between his countrymen and the Moors—a tract of history but too much overgrown with the weeds of fable. His glowing zeal, also, in the cause of the Catholic faith, entitles him to be held up as a model of the good old orthodox chroniclers, who recorded with such pious exultation the united triumphs of the cross and the sword. It is deeply to be regretted, therefore, that his manuscripts, deposited in the libraries of various convents, have been dispersed during the late convulsions in Spain, so that nothing is now to be met of them but disjointed fragments. These, however, are too precious to be suffered to fall into oblivion, as they contain many curious facts, not to be found in any other historian. In the following work, therefore, the manuscript of the worthy Fray Antonio will be adopted, wherever it exists entire; but will be filled up, extended, illustrated, and corroborated, by citations from various authors, both Spanish and Arabian, who have treated of the subject. Those who may wish to know how far the work is indebted to the chronicle of Fray Antonio Agapida, may readily satisfy their curiosity by referring to his manuscript fragments, which are carefully preserved in the library of the Escorial.

Before entering upon the history, it may be as well to notice

the opinions of certain of the most learned and devout historiographers of former times, relative to this war.

Marinus Siculus, historian to Charles V., pronounces it a war to avenge the ancient injuries received by the Christians from the Moors, to recover the kingdom of Granada, and to extend the name and honor of the Christian religion.*

Estevan de Garibay, one of the most distinguished among the Spanish historians, regards the war as a special act of divine clemency towards the Moors; to the end that those barbarians and infidels, who had dragged out so many centuries under the diabolical oppression of the absurd sect of Mahomet, should at length be reduced to the Christian faith.†

Padre Mariana, also, a venerable Jesuit, and the most renowned historian of Spain, considers the past domination of the Moors as a scourge inflicted on the Spanish nation, for its iniquities; but the triumphant war with Granada, as the reward of Heaven for its great act of propitiation in establishing the glorious tribunal of the Inquisition! No sooner (says the worthy father) was this holy office opened in Spain, than there instantly shone forth a resplendent light. Then it was, that, through divine favor, the nation increased in power, and became competent to overthrow and trample down the Moorish domination.‡

Having thus cited high and venerable authority for considering this war in the light of one of those pious enterprises denominated crusades, we trust we have said enough to engage the Christian reader to follow us into the field, and to stand by us to the very issue of the encounter.

* Lucio Marino Siculo. *Cosas Memorables de España*, lib. 20.

† Garibay. *Compend. Hist. España*, lib. 18, c. 22.

‡ Mariana. *Hist. España*, lib. 25, c. 1.

A CHRONICLE OF THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE KINGDOM OF GRANADA, AND THE TRIBUTE WHICH IT
PAID TO THE CASTILIAN CROWN.

THE history of those bloody and disastrous wars, which have caused the downfall of mighty empires, (observes Fray Antonio Agapida,) has ever been considered a study highly delectable, and full of precious edification. What then must be the history of a pious crusade, waged by the most Catholic of sovereigns, to rescue from the power of the Infidels one of the most beautiful but benighted regions of the globe? Listen then, while, from the solitude of my cell, I relate the events of the conquest of Granada, where Christian knight and turbaned Infidel disputed, inch by inch, the fair land of Andalusia, until the crescent, that symbol of heathenish abomination, was cast down, and the blessed cross, the tree of our redemption, erected in its stead.

Nearly eight hundred years were past and gone, since the Arabian invaders had sealed the perdition of Spain, by the defeat of Don Roderick, the last of her Gothic kings. Since that disastrous event, kingdom after kingdom had been gradually recovered by the Christian princes, until the single, but powerful, territory of Granada alone remained under domination of the Moors.

This renowned kingdom was situated in the southern part of Spain, bordering on the Mediterranean sea, and defended on the land side by lofty and rugged mountains, locking up within their embraces, deep, rich, and verdant valleys, where the

sterility of the surrounding heights was repaid by prodigal fertility. The city of Granada lay in the centre of the kingdom, sheltered as it were in the lap of the Sierra Nevada, or chain of snowy mountains. It covered two lofty hills, and a deep valley which divides them, through which flows the river Darro. One of these hills was crowned by the royal palace and fortress of the Alhambra, capable of containing forty thousand men within its walls and towers. There is a Moorish tradition, that the king who built this mighty pile, was skilled in the occult sciences, and furnished himself with gold and silver for the purpose by means of alchemy.* Certainly, never was there an edifice accomplished in a superior style of barbaric magnificence; and the stranger who, even at the present day, wanders among its silent and deserted courts and ruined halls, gazes with astonishment at its gilded and fretted domes and luxurious decorations, still retaining their brilliancy and beauty in defiance of the ravages of time.

Opposite to the hill on which stood the Alhambra, was its rival hill, on the summit of which was a spacious plain, covered with houses and crowded with inhabitants. It was commanded by a fortress called the Alcazaba. The declivities and skirts of these hills were covered with houses to the number of seventy thousand, separated by narrow streets and small squares, according to the custom of Moorish cities. The houses had interior courts and gardens, refreshed by fountains and running streams, and set out with oranges, citrons, and pomegranates, so that as the edifices of the city rose above each other on the sides of the hill, they presented a mingled appearance of city and grove, delightful to the eye. The whole was surrounded by high walls, three leagues in circuit, with twelve gates, and fortified by a thousand and thirty towers. The elevation of the city, and the neighborhood of the Sierra Nevada crowned with perpetual snows, tempered the fervid rays of summer; so that, while other cities were panting with the sultry and stifling heat of the dog-days, the most salubrious breezes played through the marble halls of Granada.

The glory of the city, however, was its vega or plain, which spread out to a circumference of thirty-seven leagues, surrounded by lofty mountains. It was a vast garden of delight, refreshed by numerous fountains, and by the silver windings of the Xenil. The labor and ingenuity of the Moors had

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 42.

diverted the waters of this river into thousands of rills and streams, and diffused them over the whole surface of the plain. Indeed, they had wrought up this happy region to a degree of wonderful prosperity, and took a pride in decorating it, as if it had been a favorite mistress. The hills were clothed with orchards and vineyards, the valleys embroidered with gardens, and the wide plains covered with waving grain. Here were seen in profusion the orange, the citron, the fig, and pomegranate, with great plantations of mulberry trees, from which was produced the finest of silk. The vine clambered from tree to tree; the grapes hung in rich clusters about the peasant's cottage, and the groves were rejoiced by the perpetual song of the nightingale. In a word, so beautiful was the earth, so pure the air, and so serene the sky, of this delicious region, that the Moors imagined the paradise of their Prophet to be situated in that part of the heaven which overhung the kingdom of Granada.*

This rich and populous territory had been left in quiet possession of the Infidels, on condition of an annual tribute to the sovereign of Castile and Leon, of two thousand doblas or pistoles of gold, and sixteen hundred Christian captives; or, in default of captives, an equal number of Moors to be surrendered as slaves; all to be delivered in the city of Cordova.†

At the era at which this chronicle commences, Ferdinand and Isabella, of glorious and happy memory, reigned over the united kingdoms of Castile, Leon, and Arragon; and Muley Aben Hassan sat on the throne of Granada. This Muley Aben Hassan had succeeded to his father Ismael in 1465, while Henry IV., brother and immediate predecessor of queen Isabella, was king of Castile and Leon. He was of the illustrious lineage of Mohammed Aben Alaman, the first Moorish king of Granada, and was the most potent of his line. He had in fact augmented in power, in consequence of the fall of other Moorish kingdoms, which had been conquered by the Christians. Many cities and strong places of those kingdoms, which lay contiguous to Granada, had refused to submit to Christian vassalage, and had sheltered themselves under the protection of Muley Aben Hassan. His territories had thus increased in wealth, extent, and population, beyond all former example, and contained fourteen cities and ninety-seven fortified towns,

* Juan Botero Benes. *Relaciones Universales del Mundo*.

† Garibay's *Compend*. lib. 4, c. 25.

besides numerous unwall'd towns and villages, defended by formidable castles. The spirit of Muley Aben Hassan swelled with his possessions.

The tribute of money and captives had been regularly paid by his father Ismael; and Muley Aben Hassan had, on one occasion, attended personally in Cordova, at the payment. He had witnessed the taunts and sneers of the haughty Castilians; and so indignant was the proud son of Afric at what he considered a degradation of his race, that his blood boiled whenever he recollected the humiliating scene.

When he came to the throne, he ceased all payment of the tribute; and it was sufficient to put him in a transport of rage, only to mention it. "He was a fierce and warlike Infidel," says the Catholic Fray Antonio Agapida; "his bitterness against the holy Christian faith had been signalized in battle, during the life-time of his father; and the same diabolical spirit of hostility was apparent in his ceasing to pay this most righteous tribute."

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE CATHOLIC SOVEREIGNS SENT TO DEMAND ARREARS OF TRIBUTE OF THE MOOR, AND HOW THE MOOR REPLIED.

In the year 1478, a Spanish courtier, of powerful frame and haughty demeanor, arrived at the gates of Granada, as ambassador from the Catholic monarchs, to demand the arrear of tribute. His name was Don Juan de Vera, a zealous and devout knight, full of ardor for the faith and loyalty for the crown. He was gallantly mounted, armed at all points, and followed by a moderate, but well-appointed retinue.

The Moorish inhabitants looked jealously at this small but proud array of Spanish chivalry, as it paraded, with that stateliness possessed only by Spanish cavaliers, through the renowned gate of Elvira. They were struck with the stern and lofty demeanor of Don Juan de Vera, and his sinewy frame, which showed him formed for hardy deeds of arms; and they supposed he had come in search of distinction, by defying the Moorish knights in open tourney, or in the famous tilt with reeds, for which they were so renowned; for it was still the custom of the knights of either nation to mingle in these courteous and chivalrous contests, during the intervals

of war. When they learnt, however, that he was come to demand the tribute so abhorrent to the ears of the fiery monarch, they observed that it well required a warrior of his apparent nerve, to execute such an embassy.

Muley Aben Hassan received the cavalier in state, seated on a magnificent divan, and surrounded by the officers of his court, in the hall of ambassadors, one of the most sumptuous apartments of the Alhambra. When De Vera had delivered his message, a haughty and bitter smile curled the lip of the fierce monarch. "Tell your sovereigns," said he, "that the kings of Granada, who used to pay tribute in money to the Castilian crown, are dead. Our mint at present coins nothing but blades of scimitars and heads of lances."*

The defiance couched in this proud reply, was heard with stern and lofty courtesy by Don Juan de Vera, for he was a bold soldier, and a devout hater of the Infidels; and he saw iron war in the words of the Moorish monarch. He retired from the audience chamber with stately and ceremonious gravity, being master of all points of etiquette. As he passed through the Court of Lions, and paused to regard its celebrated fountain, he fell into a discourse with the Moorish courtiers on certain mysteries of the Christian faith. The arguments advanced by those Infidels (says Fray Antonio Agapida) awakened the pious indignation of this most Christian knight and discreet ambassador; but still he restrained himself within the limits of lofty gravity, leaning on the pommel of his sword, and looking down with ineffable scorn upon the weak casuists around him. The quick and subtle Arabian witlings redoubled their light attacks upon this stately Spaniard, and thought they had completely foiled him in the contest; but the stern Juan de Vera had an argument in reserve, for which they were but little prepared; for, on one of them, of the race of the Abencerrages, daring to question, with a sneer, the immaculate conception of the blessed virgin, the Catholic knight could no longer restrain his ire. Raising his voice of a sudden, he told the Infidel he lied; and, raising his arm at the same time, he smote him on the head with his sheathed sword.

In an instant the Court of Lions glistened with the flash of arms, and its fountains would have been dyed with blood, had not Muley Aben Hassan overheard the tumult, and forbade all appeal to arms, pronouncing the person of the ambassador

* Garibay. Compend, lib. 40, c. 20.—Conde. Hist. de les Arabes, p. 4, c. 34.

sacred while within his territories. The Abencerrage treasured up the remembrance of the insult until an hour of vengeance should arrive, and the ambassador prayed our blessed lady to grant him an opportunity of proving her immaculate conception on the head of this turbaned Infidel.*

Notwithstanding this occurrence, Don Juan de Vera was treated with great distinction by Muley Aben Hassan; but nothing could make him unbend from his stern and stately reserve. Before his departure, a scimitar was sent to him by the king; the blade of the finest Damascas steel, the hilt of agate enriched with precious stones, and the guard of gold. De Vera drew it, and smiled grimly as he noticed the admirable temper of the blade. "His majesty has given me a trenchant weapon," said he; "I trust a time will come when I may show him that I know how to use his royal present." The reply was considered as a compliment, of course; the bystanders little knew the bitter hostility that lay couched beneath.

Don Juan de Vera and his companions, during their brief sojourn at Granada, learned the force, and situation of the Moor, with the eyes of practiced warriors. They saw that he was well prepared for hostilities. His walls and towers were of vast strength, in complete repair, and mounted with lombards and other heavy ordnance. His magazines were well stored with all the munitions of war: he had a mighty host of foot-soldiers, together with squadrons of cavalry, ready to scour the country and carry on either defensive or predatory warfare. The Christian warriors noted these things without dismay; their hearts rather glowed with emulation, at the thoughts of encountering so worthy a foe. As they slowly pranced through the streets of Granada, on their departure, they looked round with eagerness on its stately palaces and sumptuous mosques; on its alcayceria or bazar, crowded with silks and cloth of silver and gold, with jewels and precious stones, and other rich merchandise, the luxuries of every clime; and they longed for the time when all this wealth should be the spoil of the soldiers of the faith, and when each tramp of their steeds might be fetlock deep in the blood and carnage of the Infidels.

Don Juan de Vera and his little band pursued their way

* The Curate of Los Palacios also records this anecdote, but mentions it as happening on a subsequent occasion, when Don Juan de Vera was sent to negotiate for certain Christian captives. There appears every reason, however, to consider Fray Antonio Agapida most correct in the period to which he refers it.

slowly through the country, to the Christian frontier. Every town was strongly fortified. The vega was studded with towers of refuge for the peasantry; every pass of the mountain had its castle of defence, every lofty height its watch-tower. As the Christian cavaliers passed under the walls of the fortresses, lances and scimitars flashed from their battlements, and the turbaned sentinels seemed to dart from their dark eyes glances of hatred and defiance. It was evident that a war with this kingdom must be one of doughty peril and valiant enterprise; a war of posts, where every step must be gained by toil and bloodshed, and maintained with the utmost difficulty. The warrior spirit of the cavaliers kindled at the thoughts, and they were impatient for hostilities; "not," says Antonio Agapida, "for any thirst for rapine and revenge, but from that pure and holy indignation which every Spanish knight entertained at beholding this beautiful dominion of his ancestors defiled by the footsteps of Infidel usurpers. It was impossible," he adds, "to contemplate this delicious country, and not long to see it restored to the dominion of the true faith, and the sway of the Christian monarchs."

When Don Juan de Vera returned to the Castilian court, and reported the particulars of his mission, and all that he had heard and seen in the Moorish territories, he was highly honored and rewarded by king Ferdinand; and the zeal he had shown in vindication of the sinless conception of the blessed virgin, was not only applauded by that most Catholic of sovereigns, but gained him great favor and renown among all pious cavaliers and reverend prelates.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE MOOR DETERMINED TO STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW IN THE WAR.

THE defiance thus hurled at the Castilian sovereigns by the fiery Moorish king, would at once have been answered by the thunder of their artillery; but they were embroiled, at that time, in a war with Portugal, and in contests with their own factious nobles. The truce, therefore, which had existed for many years between the nations, was suffered to continue; the wary Ferdinand reserving the refusal to pay tribute as a fair

ground for war, whenever the favorable moment to wage it should arrive.

In the course of three years, the war with Portugal was terminated, and the factions of the Spanish nobles were, for the most part, quelled. The Castilian sovereigns now turned their thoughts to what, from the time of the union of their crowns, had been the great object of their ambition,—the conquest of Granada, and the complete extirpation of the Moslem power from Spain. Ferdinand, whose pious zeal was quickened by motives of temporal policy, looked with a craving eye at the rich territory of the Moor, studded with innumerable towns and cities. He determined to carry on the war with cautious and persevering patience, taking town after town and fortress after fortress, and gradually plucking away all the supports, before he attempted the Moorish capital. "I will pick out the seeds, one by one, of this pomegranate," said the wary Ferdinand.*

Muley Aben Hassan was aware of the hostile intentions of the Catholic monarch, but felt confident in his means of resisting them. He had amassed great wealth, during a tranquil reign; he had strengthened the defences of his kingdom, and had drawn large bodies of auxiliary troops from Barbary, besides making arrangements with the African princes to assist him with supplies, in case of emergency. His subjects were fierce of spirit, stout of heart, and valiant of hand. Inured to the exercises of war, they could fight skilfully on foot, but, above all, were dexterous horsemen, whether heavily armed and fully appointed, or lightly mounted *a la geneta*, with simply lance and target. They were patient of fatigue, hunger, thirst, and nakedness; prompt for war, at the first summons of their king, and tenacious in defence of their towns and possessions.

Thus amply provided for war, Muley Aben Hassan determined to be beforehand with the politic Ferdinand, and to be the first to strike a blow. In the truce which existed between them, there was a singular clause, permitting either party to make sudden inroads and assaults upon towns and fortresses, provided they were done furtively and by stratagem, without display of banners or sound of trumpet, or regular encampment, and that they did not last above three days.† This gave

* Granada is the Spanish term for *pomegranate*.

† Zurita. *Anales de Aragon*, l. 20, c. 41.—Mariana. *Hist. de España*, l. 25, c. 1.

rise to frequent enterprises of a hardy and adventurous character, in which castles and strongholds were taken by surprise, and carried sword in hand. A long time had elapsed, however, without any outrage of the kind on the part of the Moors; and the Christian towns on the frontiers had all, in consequence, fallen into a state of the most negligent security.

Muley Aben Hassan cast his eyes round to select his object of attack, when information was brought him that the fortress of Zahara was but feebly garrisoned and scantily supplied, and that its alcaide was careless of his charge. This important post was on the frontier, between Ronda and Medina Sidonia, and was built on the crest of a rocky mountain, with a strong castle perched above it, upon a cliff, so high that it was said to be above the flight of birds or drift of clouds. The streets and many of the houses were mere excavations, wrought out of the living rock. The town had but one gate, opening to the west, and defended by towers and bulwarks. The only ascent to this cragged fortress was by roads cut in the rock, and so rugged as in many places to resemble broken stairs. Such was the situation of the mountain fortress of Zahara, which seemed to set all attack at defiance, insomuch that it had become so proverbial throughout Spain, that a woman of forbidding and inaccessible virtue was called a *Zahareña*. But the strongest fortress and sternest virtue have weak points, and require unremitting vigilance to guard them: let warrior and dame take warning from the fate of Zahara.

CHAPTER IV.

EXPEDITION OF MULEY ABEN HASSAN AGAINST THE FORTRESS OF ZAHARA.

It was in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and eighty-one, and but a night or two after the festival of the most blessed Nativity, that Muley Aben Hassan made his famous attack upon Zahara. The inhabitants of the place were sunk in profound sleep; the very sentinel had deserted his post, and sought shelter from a tempest which had raged for three nights in succession; for it appeared but little probable that an enemy would be abroad during such an uproar of the elements. But evil spirits work best during a storm. (observes

the worthy Antonio Agapida,) and Muley Aben Hassan found such a season most suitable for his diabolical purposes. In the midst of the night, an uproar arose within the walls of Zahara, more awful than the raging of the storm. A fearful alarm cry—"The Moor! the Moor!" resounded through the streets, mingled with the clash of arms, the shriek of anguish, and the shout of victory. Muley Aben Hassan, at the head of a powerful force, had hurried from Granada, and passed unobserved through the mountains in the obscurity of the tempest. While the storm pelted the sentinel from his post, and howled round tower and battlement, the Moors had planted their scaling-ladders, and mounted securely, into both town and castle. The garrison was unsuspecting of danger, until battle and massacre burst forth within its very walls. It seemed to the affrighted inhabitants, as if the fiends of the air had come upon the wings of the wind, and possessed themselves of tower and turret. The war cry resounded on every side, shout answering shout, above, below, on the battlements of the castle, in the streets of the town—the foe was in all parts wrapped in obscurity, but acting in concert by the aid of preconcerted signals. Starting from sleep, the soldiers were intercepted and cut down as they rushed from their quarters; or, if they escaped, they knew not where to assemble, or where to strike. Wherever lights appeared, the flashing scimitar was at its deadly work, and all who attempted resistance fell beneath its edge.

In a little while, the struggle was at an end. Those who were not slain took refuge in the secret places of their houses, or gave themselves up as captives. The clash of arms ceased; and the storm continued its howling, mingled with the occasional shout of the Moorish soldiery, roaming in search of plunder. While the inhabitants were trembling for their fate, a trumpet resounded through the streets, summoning them all to assemble, unarmed, in the public square. Here they were surrounded by soldiery, and strictly guarded, until day-break. When the day dawned, it was piteous to behold this once prosperous community, who had lain down to rest in peaceful security, now crowded together without distinction of age, or rank, or sex, and almost without raiment, during the severity of a wintry storm. The fierce Muley Aben Hassan turned a deaf ear to all their prayers and remonstrances, and ordered them to be conducted captives to Granada. Leaving a strong garrison in both town and castle, with orders to put them in a

complete state of defence, he returned, flushed with victory, to his capital, entering it at the head of his troops, laden with spoil, and bearing in triumph the banners and pennons taken at Zahara.

While preparations were making for jousts and other festivities, in honour of this victory over the Christians, the captives of Zahara arrived—a wretched train of men, women, and children, worn out with fatigue and haggard with despair, and driven like cattle into the city gates, by a detachment of Moorish soldiery.

Deep was the grief and indignation of the people of Granada, at this cruel scene. Old men, who had experienced the calamities of warfare, anticipated coming troubles. Mothers clasped their infants to their breasts, as they beheld the hapless females of Zahara, with their children expiring in their arms. On every side, the accents of pity for the sufferers were mingled with execrations of the barbarity of the king. The preparations for festivity were neglected; and the viands, which were to have feasted the conquerors, were distributed among the captives.

The nobles and alfaquis, however, repaired to the Alhambra, to congratulate the king; for, whatever storms may rage in the lower regions of society, rarely do any clouds, but clouds of incense, rise to the awful eminence of the throne. In this instance, however, a voice rose from the midst of the obsequious crowd, that burst like thunder upon the ears of Aben Hassan. “Wo! wo! wo! to Granada!” exclaimed the voice; “its hour of desolation approaches. The ruins of Zahara will fall upon our heads; my spirit tells me that the end of our empire is at hand!” All shrunk back aghast, and left the denouncer of wo standing alone in the centre of the hall. He was an ancient and hoary man, in the rude attire of a dervise. Age had withered his form without quenching the fire of his spirit, which glared in baleful lustre from his eyes. He was (say the Arabian historians) one of those holy men termed santons, who pass their lives in hermitages, in fasting, meditation, and prayer, until they attain to the purity of saints and the foresight of prophets. “He was,” says the indignant Fray Antonio Agapida, “a son of Belial, one of those fanatic infidels possessed by the devil, who are sometimes permitted to predict the truth to their followers; but with the proviso, that their predictions shall be of no avail.”

The voice of the santon resounded through the lofty hall of

the Alhambra, and struck silence and awe into the crowd of courtly sycophants. Muley Aben Hassan alone was unmoved; he eyed the hoary anchorite with scorn as he stood dauntless before him, and treated his predictions as the ravings of a maniac. The santón rushed from the royal presence, and, descending into the city, hurried through its streets and squares with frantic gesticulations. His voice was heard, in every part, in awful denunciation. "The peace is broken! the exterminating war is commenced. Wo! wo! wo to Granada! its fall is at hand! desolation shall dwell in its palaces; its strong men shall fall beneath the sword, its children and maidens shall be led into captivity. Zahara is but a type of Granada!"

Terror seized upon the populace, for they considered these ravings as the inspirations of prophecy. They hid themselves in their dwellings, as in a time of general mourning; or, if they went abroad, it was to gather together in knots in the streets and squares, to alarm each other with dismal forebodings, and to curse the rashness and cruelty of the fierce Aben Hassan.

The Moorish monarch heeded not their murmurs. Knowing that his exploit must draw upon him the vengeance of the Christians, he now threw off all reserve, and made attempts to surprise Castellán and Elvira, though without success. He sent alfaquis, also, to the Barbary powers, informing them that the sword was drawn, and inviting them to aid in maintaining the kingdom of Granada, and the religion of Mahomet, against the violence of unbelievers.

CHAPTER V.

EXPEDITION OF THE MARQUES OF CADIZ AGAINST ALHAMA.

GREAT was the indignation of king Ferdinand, when he heard of the storming of Zahara—more especially as it had anticipated his intention of giving the first blow in this eventful war. He valued himself upon his deep and prudent policy; and there is nothing which politic monarchs can less forgive, than thus being forestalled by an adversary. He immediately issued orders to all the adelantados and alcaydes of the fron-

tiers, to maintain the utmost vigilance at their several posts and to prepare to carry fire and sword into the territories of the Moors.

Among the many valiant cavaliers who rallied round the throne of Ferdinand and Isabella, one of the most eminent in rank and renowned in arms was Don Roderigo Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz. As he was the distinguished champion of this holy war, and commanded in most of its enterprises and battles, it is meet that some particular account should be given of him. He was born in 1443, of the valiant lineage of the Ponces, and from his earliest youth had rendered himself illustrious in the field. He was of the middle stature, with a muscular and powerful frame, capable of great exertion and fatigue. His hair and beard were red and curled, his countenance was open and magnanimous, of a ruddy complexion, and slightly marked with the small-pox. He was temperate, chaste, valiant, vigilant; a just and generous master to his vassals; frank and noble in his deportment towards his equals; loving and faithful to his friends; fierce and terrible, yet magnanimous, to his enemies. He was considered the mirror of chivalry of his times, and compared by contemporary historians to the immortal Cid.

The marques of Cadiz had vast possessions in the most fertile parts of Andalusia, including many towns and castles, and could lead forth an army into the field from his own vassals and dependants. On receiving the orders of the king, he burned to signalize himself by some sudden incursion into the kingdom of Granada, that should give a brilliant commencement to the war, and should console the sovereigns for the insult they had received in the capture of Zahara. As his estates lay near to the Moorish frontiers, and were subject to sudden inroads, he had always in his pay numbers of adalides, or scouts and guides, many of them converted Moors. These he sent out in all directions, to watch the movements of the enemy, and to procure all kinds of information important to the security of the frontier. One of these spies came to him one day in his town of Marchena, and informed him that the Moorish town of Alhama was slightly garrisoned and negligently guarded, and might be taken by surprise. This was a large, wealthy, and populous place within a few leagues of Granada. It was situated on a rocky height, nearly surrounded by a river, and defended by a fortress to which there was no access but by a steep and craggy ascent. The strength of

its situation, and its being embosomed in the centre of the kingdom, had produced the careless security which now invited attack.

To ascertain fully the state of the fortress, the marques dispatched secretly a veteran soldier, who was highly in his confidence. His name was Ortega de Prado, a man of great activity, shrewdness, and valor, and captain of escaladors, or those employed to scale the walls of fortresses in time of attack. Ortega approached Alhama one moonless night, and paced along its walls with noiseless step, laying his ear occasionally to the ground or to the wall. Every time, he distinguished the measured tread of a sentinel, and now and then the challenge of the nightwatch going its rounds. Finding the town thus guarded, he clambered to the castle:—there all was silent. As he ranged its lofty battlements, between him and the sky he saw no sentinel on duty. He noticed certain places where the wall might be ascended by scaling-ladders; and, having marked the hour of relieving guard, and made all necessary observations, he retired without being discovered.

Ortega returned to Marchena, and assured the marques of Cadiz of the practicability of scaling the castle of Alhama, and taking it by surprise. The marques had a secret conference with Don Pedro Henriquez, adelantado of Andalusia; Don Diego de Merlo, commander of Seville; and Sancho de Avila, alcaide of Carmona, who all agreed to aid him with their forces. On an appointed day, the several commanders assembled at Marchena with their troops and retainers. None but the leaders knew the object or destination of the enterprise; but it was enough to rouse the Andalusian spirit, to know that a foray was intended into the country of their old enemies, the Moors. Secrecy and celerity were necessary for success. They set out promptly, with three thousand genetes, or light cavalry, and four thousand infantry. They chose a route but little travelled, by the way of Antiquera, passing with great labor through rugged and solitary defiles of the Sierra or chain of mountains of Alzerifa, and left all their baggage on the banks of the river Yeguas, to be brought after them. Their march was principally in the night; all day they remained quiet; no noise was suffered in their camp, and no fires were made, lest the smoke should betray them. On the third day they resumed their march as the evening darkened, and forcing themselves forward at as quick a pace as the rugged and dangerous mountain roads would permit, they descended towards midnight

into a small deep valley, only half a league from Alhama. Here they made a halt, fatigued by this forced march, during a long dark evening towards the end of February.

The marques of Cadiz now explained to the troops the object of the expedition. He told them it was for the glory of the most holy faith, and to avenge the wrongs of their countrymen of Zahara; and that the rich town of Alhama, full of wealth and spoil, was the place to be attacked. The troops were roused to new ardor by these words, and desired to be led forthwith to the assault. They arrived close to Alhama about two hours before daybreak. Here the army remained in ambush, while three hundred men were dispatched to scale the walls and get possession of the castle. They were picked men, many of them alcajdes and officers, men who preferred death to dishonor. This gallant band was guided by the escalador Ortega de Prado, at the head of thirty men with scaling-ladders. They clambered the ascent to the castle in silence, and arrived under the dark shadow of its towers without being discovered. Not a light was to be seen, not a sound to be heard; the whole place was wrapped in profound repose.

Fixing their ladders, they ascended cautiously and with noiseless steps. Ortega was the first that mounted upon the battlements, followed by one Martin Galindo, a youthful esquire, full of spirit and eager for distinction. Moving stealthily along the parapet to the portal of the citadel, they came upon the sentinel by surprise. Ortega seized him by the throat, brandished a dagger before his eyes, and ordered him to point the way to the guard-room. The infidel obeyed, and was instantly dispatched, to prevent his giving an alarm. The guard-room was a scene rather of massacre than combat. Some of the soldiery were killed while sleeping, others were cut down almost without resistance, bewildered by so unexpected an assault: all were dispatched, for the scaling party was too small to make prisoners or to spare. The alarm spread throughout the castle, but by this time the three hundred picked men had mounted the battlements. The garrison, startled from sleep, found the enemy already masters of the towers. Some of the Moors were cut down at once, others fought desperately from room to room, and the whole castle resounded with the clash of arms, the cries of the combatants, and the groans of the wounded. The army in ambush, finding by the uproar that the castle was surprised, now rushed from their concealment, and approached the walls with loud shouts, and sound of ket-

tle-drums and trumpets, to increase the confusion and dismay of the garrison. A violent conflict took place in the court of the castle, where several of the scaling party sought to throw open the gates to admit their countrymen. Here fell two valiant alcaides, Nicholas de Roja and Sancho de Avila; but they fell honorably, upon a heap of slain. At length Ortega de Prado succeeded in throwing open a postern, through which the marques of Cadiz, the adelantado of Andalusia, and Don Diego de Merlo, entered with a host of followers, and the citadel remained in full possession of the Christians.

As the Spanish cavaliers were ranging from room to room, the marques of Cadiz, entering an apartment of superior richness to the rest, beheld, by the light of a silver lamp, a beautiful Moorish female, the wife of the alcaide of the castle, whose husband was absent, attending a wedding-feast at Velez Malaga. She would have fled at the sight of a Christian warrior in her apartment, but, entangled in the covering of the bed, she fell at the feet of the marques, imploring mercy. The Christian cavalier, who had a soul full of honor and courtesy towards the sex, raised her from the floor, and endeavored to allay her fears; but they were increased at the sight of her female attendants, pursued into the room by the Spanish soldiery. The marques reproached his soldiers with their unmanly conduct, and reminded them that they made war upon men, not on defenceless women. Having soothed the terrors of the females by the promise of honorable protection, he appointed a trusty guard to watch over the security of their apartment.

The castle was now taken; but the town below it was in arms. It was broad day, and the people, recovered from their panic, were enabled to see and estimate the force of the enemy. The inhabitants were chiefly merchants and tradespeople; but the Moors all possessed a knowledge of the use of weapons, and were of brave and warlike spirit. They confided in the strength of their walls, and the certainty of speedy relief from Granada, which was but about eight leagues distant. Manning the battlements and towers, they discharged showers of stones and arrows, whenever the part of the Christian army, without the walls, attempted to approach. They barricadoed the entrances of their streets, also, which opened towards the castle; stationing men expert at the cross-bow and arquebuse. These kept up a constant fire upon the gate of the castle, so that no one could sally forth without being instantly shot down. Two

valiant cavaliers, who attempted to lead forth a party in defiance of this fatal tempest, were shot dead at the very portal.

The Christians now found themselves in a situation of great peril. Reinforcements must soon arrive to the enemy from Granada; unless, therefore, they gained possession of the town in the course of the day, they were likely to be surrounded and beleaguered, without provisions, in the castle. Some observed that, even if they took the town, they should not be able to maintain possession of it. They proposed, therefore, to make booty of every thing valuable, to sack the castle, set it on fire, and make good their retreat to Seville.

The marques of Cadiz was of different counsel. "God has given the citadel into Christian hands," said he; "he will no doubt strengthen them to maintain it. We have gained the place with difficulty and bloodshed; it would be a stain upon our honor to abandon it through fear of imaginary dangers." The adelantado and Don Diego de Merlo joined in his opinion; but without their earnest and united remonstrances, the place would have been abandoned; so exhausted were the troops by forced marches and hard fighting, and so apprehensive of the approach of the Moors of Granada.

The strength and spirits of the party within the castle were in some degree restored by the provisions which they found. The Christian army beneath the town, being also refreshed by a morning's repast, advanced vigorously to the attack of the walls. They planted their scaling-ladders, and, swarming up, sword in hand, fought fiercely with the Moorish soldiery upon the ramparts.

In the mean time, the marquis of Cadiz, seeing that the gate of the castle, which opened toward the city, was completely commanded by the artillery of the enemy, ordered a large breach to be made in the wall, through which he might lead his troops to the attack; animating them, in this perilous moment, by assuring them that the place should be given up to plunder, and its inhabitants made captives.

The breach being made, the marquis put himself at the head of his troops, and entered sword in hand. A simultaneous attack was made by the Christians in every part—by the ramparts, by the gate, by the roofs and walls which connected the castle with the town. The Moors fought valiantly in their streets, from their windows, and from the tops of their houses. They were not equal to the Christians in bodily strength, for they were for the most part peaceful men, of industrious call-

ings, and enervated by the frequent use of the warm bath; but they were superior in number, and unconquerable in spirit; old and young, strong and weak, fought with the same desperation. The Moors fought for property, for liberty, for life. They fought at their thresholds and their hearths, with the shrieks of their wives and children ringing in their ears, and they fought in the hope that each moment would bring aid from Granada. They regarded neither their own wounds nor the deaths of their companions; but continued fighting until they fell, and seemed as if, when they could no longer contend, they would block up the thresholds of their beloved homes with their mangled bodies. The Christians fought for glory, for revenge, for the holy faith, and for the spoil of these wealthy infidels. Success would place a rich town at their mercy; failure would deliver them into the hands of the tyrant of Granada.

The contest raged from morning until night, when the Moors began to yield. Retreating to a large mosque near the walls, they kept up so galling a fire from it with lances, cross-bows, and arquebuses, that for some time the Christians dared not approach. Covering themselves, at length, with bucklers and mantelets* to protect them from the deadly shower, they made their way to the mosque, and set fire to the doors. When the smoke and flames rolled in upon them, the Moors gave up all as lost. Many rushed forth desperately upon the enemy, but were immediately slain; the rest surrendered themselves captives.

The struggle was now at an end; the town remained at the mercy of the Christians; and the inhabitants, both male and female, became the slaves of those who made them prisoners. Some few escaped by a mine or subterranean way, which led to the river, and concealed themselves, their wives and children, in caves and secret places; but in three or four days, were compelled to surrender themselves through hunger.

The town was given up to plunder, and the booty was immense. There were found prodigious quantities of gold and silver, and jewels, and rich silks, and costly stuffs of all kinds; together with horses and beeves, and abundance of grain and oil, and honey, and all other productions of this fruitful kingdom; for in Alhama were collected the royal rents and tributes

* Mantelet—a movable parapet, made of thick planks, to protect troops, when advancing to sap or assault a walled place.

of the surrounding country; it was the richest town in the Moorish territory, and, from its great strength and its peculiar situation, was called the key to Granada.

Great waste and devastation were committed by the Spanish soldiery; for, thinking it would be impossible to keep possession of the place, they began to destroy whatever they could not take away. Immense jars of oil were broken, costly furniture shattered to pieces, and magazines of grain broken open, and their contents scattered to the winds. Many Christian captives, who had been taken at Zahara, were found buried in a Moorish dungeon, and were triumphantly restored to light and liberty; and a renegado Spaniard, who had often served as guide to the Moors in their incursions into the Christian territories, was hanged on the highest part of the battlements, for the edification of the army.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE PEOPLE OF GRANADA WERE AFFECTED, ON HEARING OF THE CAPTURE OF ALHAMA; AND HOW THE MOORISH KING SALLIED FORTH TO REGAIN IT.

A MOORISH horseman had spurred across the vega, nor reined his panting steed until he alighted at the gate of the Alhambra. He brought tidings to Muley Aben Hassan, of the attack upon Alhama.

"The Christians," said he, "are in the land. They came upon us, we know not whence or how, and scaled the walls of the castle in the night. There has been dreadful fighting and carnage in its towers and courts; and when I spurred my steed from the gate of Alhama, the castle was in possession of the unbelievers."

Muley Aben Hassan felt for a moment as if swift retribution had come upon him for the woes he had inflicted upon Zahara. Still he flattered himself that this had only been some transient inroad of a party of marauders, intent upon plunder; and that a little succor, thrown into the town, would be sufficient to expel them from the castle, and drive them from the land. He ordered out, therefore, a thousand of his chosen cavalry, and sent them in all speed to the assistance of Alhama. They

arrived before its walls, the morning after its capture: the Christian standards floated upon its towers, and a body of cavalry poured forth from its gates and came wheeling down into the plain to receive them.

The Moorish horsemen turned the reins of their steeds, and galloped back for Granada. They entered its gates in tumultuous confusion, spreading terror and lamentation by their tidings. "Alhama is fallen! Alhama is fallen!" exclaimed they; "the Christians garrison its walls; the key of Granada is in the hands of the enemy!"

When the people heard these words, they remembered the denunciation of the santón. His prediction seemed still to resound in every ear, and its fulfilment to be at hand. Nothing was heard throughout the city but sighs and wailings. "Wo is me, Alhama!" was in every mouth; and this ejaculation of deep sorrow and doleful foreboding, came to be the burthen of a plaintive ballad, which remains until the present day.*

Many aged men, who had taken refuge in Granada from other Moorish dominions which had fallen into the power of the Christians, now groaned in despair at the thoughts that war was to follow them into this last retreat, to lay waste this pleasant land, and to bring trouble and sorrow upon their declining years. The women were more loud and vehement in their grief; for they beheld the evils impending over their children, and what can restrain the agony of a mother's heart? Many of them made their way through the halls of the Alhambra into the presence of the king, weeping, and wailing, and tearing their hair. "Accursed be the day," cried they, "that thou hast lit the flame of war in our land! May the holy Prophet bear witness before Allah, that we and our children are innocent of this act! Upon thy head, and upon the heads of thy posterity, until the end of the world, rest the sin of the desolation of Zahara!"†

Muley Aben Hassan remained unmoved, amidst all this storm; his heart was hardened (observes Fray Antonio Agapida) like that of Pharaoh, to the end that, through his blind violence and rage, he might produce the deliverance of the land from its heathen bondage. In fact, he was a bold and

* The mournful little Spanish romance of *Ay de mí, Alhama!* is supposed to be of Moorish origin, and to embody the grief of the people of Granada on this occasion.

† Garibay. lib. 40. c. 29.

fearless warrior, and trusted soon to make this blow recoil upon the head of the enemy. He had ascertained that the captors of Alhama were but a handful: they were in the centre of his dominions, within a short distance of his capital. They were deficient in munitions of war, and provisions for sustaining a siege. By a rapid movement, he might surround them with a powerful army, cut off all aid from their countrymen, and entrap them in the fortress they had taken.

To think was to act, with Muley Aben Hassan; but he was prone to act with too much precipitation. He immediately set forth in person, with three thousand horse and fifty thousand foot, and in his eagerness to arrive at the scene of action, would not wait to provide artillery and the various engines required in a siege. "The multitude of my forces," said he, confidently, "will be sufficient to overwhelm the enemy."

The marques of Cadiz, who thus held possession of Alhama, had a chosen friend and faithful companion in arms, among the most distinguished of the Christian chivalry. This was Don Alonzo de Cordova, senior and lord of the house of Aguilar, and brother of Gonsalvo of Cordova, afterwards renowned as grand captain of Spain. As yet, Alonzo de Aguilar was the glory of his name and race—for his brother was but young in arms. He was one of the most hardy, valiant, and enterprising of the Spanish knights, and foremost in all service of a perilous and adventurous nature. He had not been at hand, to accompany his friend Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, in his inroad into the Moorish territory; but he hastily assembled a number of retainers, horse and foot, and pressed forward to join the enterprise. Arriving at the river Yeguas, he found the baggage of the army still upon its banks, and took charge of it to carry it to Alhama. The marques of Cadiz heard of the approach of his friend, whose march was slow in consequence of being encumbered by the baggage. He was within but a few leagues of Alhama, when scouts came hurrying into the place, with intelligence that the Moorish king was at hand with a powerful army. The marques of Cadiz was filled with alarm lest De Aguilar should fall into the hands of the enemy. Forgetting his own danger, and thinking only of that of his friend, he dispatched a well-mounted messenger to ride full speed, and warn him not to approach.

The first determination of Alonzo de Aguilar, when he heard that the Moorish king was at hand, was to take a strong position in the mountains, and await his coming. The madness of

an attempt with his handful of men to oppose an immense army, was represented to him with such force as to induce him to abandon the idea; he then thought of throwing himself into Alhama, to share the fortunes of his friend: but it was now too late. The Moor would infallibly intercept him, and he should only give the marques the additional distress of beholding him captured beneath his walls. It was even urged upon him that he had no time for delay, if he would consult his own safety, which could only be insured by an immediate retreat into the Christian territory. This last opinion was confirmed by the return of scouts, who brought information that Muley Aben Hassan had received notice of his movements, and was rapidly advancing in quest of him. It was with infinite reluctance that Don Alonzo de Aguilar yielded to these united and powerful reasons. Proudly and sullenly he drew off his forces, laden with the baggage of the army, and made an unwilling retreat towards Antiquera. Muley Aben Hassan pursued him for some distance through the mountains, but soon gave up the chase and turned with his forces upon Alhama.

As the army approached the town, they beheld the fields strewn with the dead bodies of their countrymen, who had fallen in defence of the place, and had been cast forth and left unburied by the Christians. There they lay, mangled, and exposed to every indignity; while droves of half-famished dogs were preying upon them, and fighting and howling, over their hideous repast.* Furious at the sight, the Moors, in the first transports of their rage, attacked those ravenous animals: their next measure was to vent their fury upon the Christians. They rushed like madmen to the walls, applied scaling-ladders in all parts, without waiting for the necessary mantelets and other protections,—thinking, by attacking suddenly and at various points, to distract the enemy, and overcome them by the force of numbers.

The marques of Cadiz, with his confederate commanders, distributed themselves along the walls, to direct and animate their men in the defence. The Moors, in their blind fury, often assailed the most difficult and dangerous places. Darts, stones, and all kinds of missiles, were hurled down upon their defenceless heads. As fast as they mounted they were cut down, or dashed from the battlements, their ladders overturned, and all who were on them precipitated headlong below.

* Pulgar. Cronica.

Muley Aben Hassan stormed with passion at the sight; he sent detachment after detachment to scale the walls—but in vain; they were like waves rushing upon a rock, only to dash themselves to pieces. The Moors lay in heaps beneath the wall, and among them many of the bravest cavaliers of Granada. The Christians, also, sallied frequently from the gates, and made great havoc in the irregular multitude of assailants.

On one of these occasions, the party was commanded by Don Juan de Vera, the same pious and high-handed knight who had borne the embassy to Muley Aben Hassan, demanding tribute. As this doughty cavalier, after a career of carnage, was slowly retreating to the gate, he heard a voice loudly calling after him, in furious accents. "Turn back! turn back!" cried the voice; "thou who canst insult in hall, prove that thou canst combat in the field." Don Juan de Vera turned, and beheld the same Abencerrage whom he had struck with his sword in the Alhambra, for scoffing at the immaculate conception of the blessed virgin. All his holy zeal and pious indignation re-kindled at the sight; he put lance in rest, and spurred his steed to finish this doctrinal dispute. Don Juan de Vera was a potent and irresistible arguer with his weapon; and he was aided (says Fray Antonio Agapida) by the peculiar virtue of his cause. At the very first encounter, his lance entered the mouth of the Moor, and hurled him to the earth, never more to utter word or breath. Thus (continues the worthy friar) did this scoffing infidel receive a well-merited punishment, through the very organ with which he had offended; and thus was the immaculate conception miraculously vindicated from his foul aspersions.

The vigorous and successful defence of the Christians, now made Muley Aben Hassan sensible of his error in hurrying from Granada without the proper engines for a siege. Destitute of all means to batter the fortifications, the town remained uninjured, defying the mighty army which raged and roamed before it. Incensed at being thus foiled, Muley Aben Hassan gave orders to undermine the walls. The Moors advanced with shouts to the attempt. They were received with a deadly fire from the ramparts, which drove them from their works. Repeatedly were they repulsed, and repeatedly did they return to the charge. The Christians not merely galled them from the battlements, but issued forth and cut them down in the excavations they were attempting to form. The

contest lasted throughout a whole day, and by evening two thousand Moors were either killed or wounded.

Muley Aben Hassan now abandoned all hope of carrying the place by assault, and attempted to distress it into terms by turning the channel of the river which runs by its walls. On this stream the inhabitants depended for their supply of water, the place being destitute of fountains and cisterns; from which circumstance it is called *Alhama la seca*, or "the dry."

A desperate conflict ensued on the banks of the river, the Moors endeavoring to plant palisades in its bed to divert the stream, and the Christians striving to prevent them. The Spanish commanders exposed themselves to the utmost danger to animate their men, who were repeatedly driven back into the town. The marques of Cadiz was often up to his knees in the stream, fighting hand to hand with the Moors. The water ran red with blood, and was encumbered with dead bodies. At length, the overwhelming numbers of the Moors gave them the advantage, and they succeeded in diverting the greater part of the water. The Christians had to struggle severely, to supply themselves from the feeble rill which remained. They sallied to the river by a subterraneous passage; but the Moorish cross-bowmen stationed themselves on the opposite bank, keeping up a heavy fire upon the Christians, whenever they attempted to fill their vessels from the scanty and turbid stream. One party of the Christians had, therefore, to fight, while another drew water. At all hours of the day and night, this deadly strife was maintained, until it seemed as if every drop of water were purchased with a drop of blood.

In the mean time, the suffering in the town became intense. None but the soldiery and their horses were allowed the precious beverage so dearly earned, and even that in quantities that only tantalized their wants. The wounded, who could not sally to procure it, were almost destitute; while the unhappy prisoners, shut up in the mosques, were reduced to frightful extremities. Many perished raving mad, fancying themselves swimming in boundless seas, yet unable to assuage their thirst. Many of the soldiers lay parched and panting along the battlements, no longer able to draw a bowstring or hurl a stone; while above five thousand Moors, stationed upon a rocky height which overlooked part of the town, kept up a galling fire into it with slings and cross-bows; so that the marques of Cadiz was obliged to heighten the battlements, by using the doors from the private dwellings.

The Christian cavaliers, exposed to this extreme peril, and in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, dispatched fleet messengers to Seville and Cordova, entreating the chivalry of Andalusia to hasten to their aid. They sent likewise, imploring assistance from the king and queen, who at that time held their court in Medina del Campo. In the midst of their distress, a tank, or cistern, of water, was fortunately discovered in the city, which gave temporary relief to their sufferings.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE DUKE OF MEDINA SIDONIA, AND THE CHIVALRY OF ANDALUSIA, HASTENED TO THE RELIEF OF ALHAMA.

THE perilous situation of the Christian cavaliers, pent up and beleaguered within the walls of Alhama, spread terror among their friends, and anxiety throughout all Andalusia. Nothing, however, could equal the anguish of the marchioness of Cadiz, the wife of the gallant Roderigo Ponce de Leon. In her deep distress, she looked round for some powerful noble, who had the means of rousing the country to the assistance of her husband. No one appeared more competent for the purpose than **Don Juan de Guzman**, the duke of Medina Sidonia. He was one of the most wealthy and puissant grandees of Spain; his possessions extended over some of the most fertile parts of Andalusia, embracing towns, and seaports, and numerous villages. Here he reigned in feudal state, like a petty sovereign, and could at any time bring into the field an immense force of vassals and retainers.

The duke of Medina Sidonia and the marques of Cadiz, however, were at this time deadly foes. An hereditary feud existed between them, which had often arisen to bloodshed and open war; for as yet the fierce contests between the proud and puissant Spanish nobles had not been completely quelled by the power of the crown, and in this respect they exerted a right of sovereignty, in leading their vassals against each other in open field.

The duke of Medina Sidonia would have appeared, to many, the very last person to whom to apply for aid of the marques of Cadiz; but the marchioness judged of him by the standard

of her own high and generous mind. She knew him to be a gallant and courteous knight, and had already experienced the magnanimity of his spirit, having been relieved by him when besieged by the Moors in her husband's fortress of Arcos. To the duke, therefore, she applied in this moment of sudden calamity, imploring him to furnish succor to her husband. The event showed how well noble spirits understand each other. No sooner did the duke receive this appeal from the wife of his enemy, than he generously forgot all feeling of animosity, and determined to go in person to his succor. He immediately despatched a courteous letter to the marchioness, assuring her that in consideration of the request of so honorable and estimable a lady, and to rescue from peril so valiant a cavalier as her husband, whose loss would be great, not only to Spain, but to all Christendom, he would forego the recollection of all past grievances, and hasten to his relief with all the forces he could raise.

The duke wrote at the same time to the alcaides of his towns and fortresses, ordering them to join him forthwith at Seville, with all the forces they could spare from their garrisons. He called on all the chivalry of Andalusia to make a common cause in the rescue of those Christian cavaliers, and he offered large pay to all volunteers who would resort to him with horses, armor, and provisions. Thus all who could be incited by honor, religion, patriotism, or thirst of gain, were induced to hasten to his standard, and he took the field with an army of five thousand horse and fifty thousand foot.* Many cavaliers of distinguished name accompanied him in this generous enterprise. Among these was the redoubtable Alonzo de Aguilar, the chosen friend of the marques of Cadiz, and with him his younger brother, Gonsalvo Fernandez de Cordova, afterwards renowned as the grand captain; Don Roderigo Giron, also, Master of the order of Calatrava, together with Martin Alonzo de Montemayor, and the marques De Villena, esteemed the best lance in Spain. It was a gallant and splendid army, comprising the flower of Spanish chivalry, and poured forth in brilliant array from the gates of Seville, bearing the great standard of that ancient and renowned city.

Ferdinand and Isabella were at Medina del Campo, when tidings came of the capture of Alhama. The king was at mass when he received the news, and ordered *te deum* to be chanted

* Cronica de los Duques de Medina Sidonia, por Pedro de Medina. MS.

for this signal triumph of the holy faith. When the first flush of triumph had subsided, and the king learnt the imminent peril of the valorous Ponce de Leon and his companions, and the great danger that this strong-hold might again be wrested from their grasp, he resolved to hurry in person to the scene of action. So pressing appeared to him the emergency, that he barely gave himself time to take a hasty repast while horses were providing, and then departed at furious speed for Andalusia, leaving a request for the queen to follow him.* He was attended by Don Beltram de la Cueva, duke of Albuquerque, Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, count of Tendilla, and Don Pedro Mauriques, count of Treviño, with a few more cavaliers of prowess and distinction. He travelled by forced journeys, frequently changing his jaded horses, being eager to arrive in time to take command of the Andalusian chivalry. When he arrived within five leagues of Cordova, the duke of Albuquerque remonstrated with him upon entering, with such incautious haste, into the enemies' country. He represented to him that there were troops enough assembled to succor Alhama, and that it was not for him to venture his royal person in doing what could be done by his subjects; especially as he had such valiant and experienced captains to act for him. "Besides, sire," added the duke, "your majesty should bethink you that the troops about to take the field are mere men of Andalusia, whereas your illustrious predecessors never made an inroad into the territory of the Moors, without being accompanied by a powerful force of the staunch and iron warriors of old Castile."

"Duke," replied the king, "your counsel might have been good, had I not departed from Medina with the avowed determination of succoring these cavaliers in person. I am now near the end of my journey, and it would be beneath my dignity to change my intention, before even I had met with an impediment. I shall take the troops of this country who are assembled, without waiting for those of Castile, and with the aid of God, shall prosecute my journey."†

As king Ferdinand approached Cordova, the principal inhabitants came forth to receive him. Learning, however, that the duke of Medina Sidonia was already on the march, and pressing forward into the territory of the Moors, the king

* Illescas. Hist. Pontifical.

† Pulgar. Cronica, p. 3, c. 3.

was all on fire to overtake him, and to lead in person the succor to Alhama. Without entering Cordova, therefore, he exchanged his weary horses for those of the inhabitants who had come forth to meet him, and pressed forward for the army. He dispatched fleet couriers in advance, requesting the duke of Medina Sidonia to await his coming, that he might take command of the forces.

Neither the duke nor his companions in arms, however, felt inclined to pause in their generous expedition, and gratify the inclination of the king. They sent back missives, representing that they were far within the enemies' frontier, and it was dangerous either to pause or turn back. They had likewise received pressing entreaties from the besieged to hasten their speed, setting forth their great sufferings, and their hourly peril of being overwhelmed by the enemy.

The king was at Ponton del Maestre, when he received these missives. So inflamed was he with zeal for the success of this enterprise, that he would have penetrated into the kingdom of Granada with the handful of cavaliers who accompanied him, but they represented the rashness of such a journey, through the mountainous defiles of a hostile country, thickly beset with towns and castles. With some difficulty, therefore, he was dissuaded from his inclination, and prevailed upon to await tidings from the army, in the frontier city of Antiquera.

CHAPTER VIII.

SEQUEL OF THE EVENTS AT ALHAMA.

WHILE all Andalusia was thus in arms, and pouring its chivalry through the mountain passes of the Moorish frontier the garrison of Alhama was reduced to great extremity, and in danger of sinking under its sufferings before the promised succor could arrive. The intolerable thirst that prevailed in consequence of the scarcity of water, the incessant watch that had to be maintained over the vast force of enemies without and the great number of prisoners within, and the wounds which almost every soldier had received in the incessant skirmishes and assaults, had worn grievously both flesh and spirit. The noble Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, still animated the soldiery, however, by word and example, sharing

every hardship and being foremost in every danger; exemplifying that a good commander is the vital spirit of an army.

When Muley Aben Hassan heard of the vast force that was approaching under the command of the duke of Medina Sidonia, and that Ferdinand was coming in person with additional troops, he perceived that no time was to be lost: Alhama must be carried by one powerful attack, or abandoned entirely to the Christians.

A number of Moorish cavaliers, some of the bravest youth of Granada, knowing the wishes of the king, proposed to undertake a desperate enterprise, which, if successful, must put Alhama in his power. Early one morning, when it was scarcely the gray of the dawn, about the time of changing the watch, these cavaliers approached the town, at a place considered inaccessible, from the steepness of the rocks on which the wall was founded; which, it was supposed, elevated the battlements beyond the reach of the longest scaling-ladder. The Moorish knights, aided by a number of the strongest and most active escaladors, mounted these rocks, and applied the ladders, without being discovered; for, to divert attention from them, Muley Aben Hassan made a false attack upon the town in another quarter.

The scaling party mounted with difficulty, and in small numbers; the sentinel was killed at his post, and seventy of the Moors made their way into the streets before an alarm was given. The guards rushed to the walls, to stop the hostile throng that was still pouring in. A sharp conflict, hand to hand and man to man, took place on the battlements, and many on both sides fell. The Moors, whether wounded or slain, were thrown headlong without the walls; the scaling-ladders were overturned, and those who were mounting were dashed upon the rocks, and from thence tumbled upon the plain. Thus, in a little while, the ramparts were cleared by Christian prowess, led on by that valiant knight Don Alonzo Ponce, the uncle, and that brave esquire Pedro Pineda, nephew of the marques of Cadiz.

The walls being cleared, these two kindred cavaliers now hastened with their forces in pursuit of the seventy Moors who had gained an entrance into the town. The main party of the garrison being engaged at a distance resisting the feigned attack of the Moorish king, this fierce band of infidels had ranged the streets almost without opposition, and were making their way to the gates to throw them open to the

army.* They were chosen men from among the Moorish forces, several of them gallant knights of the proudest families of Granada. Their footsteps through the city were in a manner printed in blood, and they were tracked by the bodies of those they had killed and wounded. They had attained the gate; most of the guard had fallen beneath their scimitars: a moment more, and Alhama would have been thrown open to the enemy.

Just at this juncture, Don Alonzo Ponce and Pedro de Pineda reached the spot with their forces. The Moors had the enemy in front and rear; they placed themselves back to back, with their banner in the centre. In this way they fought with desperate and deadly determination, making a rampart around them with the slain. More Christian troops arrived, and hemmed them in; but still they fought, without asking for quarter. As their numbers decreased, they serried their circle still closer, defending their banner from assault; and the last Moor died at his post, grasping the standard of the Prophet. This standard was displayed from the walls, and the turbaned heads of the Moors were thrown down to the besiegers.†

Muley Aben Hassan tore his beard with rage at the failure of this attempt, and at the death of so many of his chosen cavaliers. He saw that all further effort was in vain; his scouts brought word that they had seen from the heights, the long columns and flaunting banners of the Christian army approaching through the mountains. To linger would be to place himself between two bodies of the enemy. Breaking up his camp, therefore, in all haste, he gave up the siege of Alhama, and hastened back to Granada; and the last clash of his cymbals scarce died upon the ear from the distant hills, before the standard of the duke of Medina Sidonia was seen emerging in another direction from the defiles of the mountains.

When the Christians in Alhama beheld their enemies retreating on one side and their friends advancing on the other, they uttered shouts of joy and hymns of thanksgiving, for it was as a sudden relief from present death. Harassed by several weeks of incessant vigil and fighting, suffering from scarcity of provisions and almost continual thirst, they resembled

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 43.

† Pedro de Pineda received the honor of knighthood from the hand of king Ferdinand, for his valor on this occasion; (Alonzo Ponce was already knight.) See Zuñiga, *Annales of Seville*, lib. 12. an, 1482.

skeletons rather than living men. It was a noble and gracious sight to behold the meeting of those two ancient foes, the duke of Medina Sidonia and the marques of Cadiz. When the marques beheld his magnanimous deliverer approaching, he melted into tears; all past animosities only gave the greater poignancy to present feelings of gratitude and admiration; they clasped each other in their arms, and from that time forward were true and cordial friends.

While this generous scene took place between the commanders, a sordid contest arose among their troops. The soldiers who had come to the rescue claimed a portion of the spoils of Alhama; and so violent was the dispute, that both parties seized their arms. The duke of Medina Sidonia interfered, and settled the question with his characteristic magnanimity. He declared that the spoil belonged to those who had captured the city. "We have taken the field," said he, "only for honor, for religion, and for the rescue of our countrymen and fellow-Christians; and the success of our enterprise is a sufficient and a glorious reward. If we desire booty, there are sufficient Moorish cities yet to be taken, to enrich us all." The soldiers were convinced by the frank and chivalrous reasoning of the duke; they replied to his speech by acclamations, and the transient broil was happily appeased.

The marchioness of Cadiz, with the forethought of a loving wife, had dispatched her major domo with the army with a large supply of provisions. Tables were immediately spread beneath the tents, where the marques gave a banquet to the duke and the cavaliers who had accompanied him, and nothing but hilarity prevailed in this late scene of suffering and death.

A garrison of fresh troops was left in Alhama; and the veterans who had so valiantly captured and maintained it, returned to their homes, burthened with precious booty. The marques and duke, with their confederate cavaliers, repaired to Antiquera, where they were received with great distinction by the king, who honored the marques of Cadiz with signal marks of favor. The duke then accompanied his late enemy, but now most zealous and grateful friend, the marques of Cadiz, to his town of Marchena, where he received the reward of his generous conduct, in the thanks and blessings of the marchioness. The marques celebrated a sumptuous feast, in honor of his guest; for a day and night, his palace was thrown open, and was the scene of continual revel and festivity. When the duke departed for his estates at St. Lucar, the

marques attended him for some distance on his journey; and when they separated, it was as the parting scene of brothers. Such was the noble spectacle exhibited to the chivalry of Spain, by these two illustrious rivals. Each reaped universal renown from the part he had performed in the campaign; the marques, from having surprised and captured one of the most important and formidable fortresses of the kingdom of Granada; and the duke, from having subdued his deadliest foe, by a great act of magnanimity.

CHAPTER IX.

EVENTS AT GRANADA, AND RISE OF THE MOORISH KING BOABDIL EL CHICO.

THE Moorish king, Aben Hassan, returned, baffled and disappointed, from before the walls of Alhama, and was received with groans and smothered execrations by the people of Granada. The prediction of the santon was in every mouth, and appeared to be rapidly fulfilling; for the enemy was already strongly fortified in Alhama, in the very heart of the kingdom. The disaffection, which broke out in murmurs among the common people, fermented more secretly and dangerously among the nobles. Muley Aben Hassan was of a fierce and cruel nature; his reign had been marked with tyranny and bloodshed, and many chiefs of the family of the Abencerrages, the noblest lineage among the Moors, had fallen victims to his policy or vengeance. A deep plot was now formed, to put an end to his oppressions, and dispossess him of the throne. The situation of the royal household favored the conspiracy.

Muley Aben Hassan, though cruel, was uxorious; that is to say, he had many wives, and was prone to be managed by them by turns. He had two queens in particular, whom he had chosen from affection. One, named Ayxa, was a Moorish female; she was likewise termed in Arabic, La Horra, or the chaste, from the spotless purity of her character. While yet in the prime of her beauty, she bore a son to Aben Hassan, the expected heir to his throne. The name of this prince was Mahomet Abdalla, or, as he has more generally been termed among historians, Boabdil. At his birth, the astrologers, according to custom, cast his horoscope: they were seized with

fear and trembling, when they beheld the fatal portents revealed to their science. "Allah Achbar! God is great!" exclaimed they; "he alone controls the fate of empires. It is written in the heavens that this prince shall sit upon the throne of Granada, but that the downfall of the kingdom shall be accomplished during his reign." From this time, the prince was ever regarded with aversion by his father; and the series of persecutions which he suffered, and the dark prediction which hung over him from his infancy, procured him the surname of *El Zogoybi*, or "the unfortunate." He is more commonly known by the appellation of *El Chico* (the younger), to distinguish him from an usurping uncle.

The other favorite queen of *Aben Hassan* was named *Fatima*, to which the Moors added the appellation of *La Zoraya*, or the light of dawn, from her effulgent beauty. She was a Christian by birth, the daughter of the commander *Sancho Ximenes de Solis*, and had been taken captive in her tender youth.* The king, who was well stricken in years at the time, became enamored of the blooming Christian maid; he made her his sultana, and, like most old men who marry in their dotage, resigned himself to her management. *Zoraya* became the mother of two princes, and her anxiety for their advancement seemed to extinguish every other natural feeling in her breast. She was as ambitious as she was beautiful, and her ruling desire became to see one of her sons seated upon the throne of Granada. For this purpose, she made use of all her arts, and of the complete ascendancy she had over the mind of her cruel husband, to undermine his other children in his affections, and to fill him with jealousies of their designs. *Muley Aben Hassan* was so wrought upon by her machinations, that he publicly put several of his sons to death, at the celebrated fountain of Lions, in the court of the *Alhambra*,—a place signalized in Moorish history as the scene of many sanguinary deeds.

The next measure of *Zoraya*, was against her rival sultana, the virtuous *Ayxa*. She was past the bloom of her beauty, and had ceased to be attractive in the eyes of her husband. He was easily persuaded to repudiate her, and to confine her and her son in the tower of *Cimares*, one of the principal towers of the *Alhambra*. As *Boabdil* increased in years, *Zoraya* beheld in him a formidable obstacle to the pretensions of her sons; for he was universally considered heir-apparent to the throne.

* *Salazar*. *Cronica del Gran Cardinal*, cap. 71.

The jealousies, suspicions, and alarms of his tiger-hearted father, were again excited; he was reminded, too, of the prediction that fixed the ruin of the kingdom during the reign of this prince. Muley Aben Hassan impiously set the stars at defiance: "The sword of the executioner," said he, "shall prove the falsehood of these lying horoscopes, and shall silence the ambition of Boabdil, as it has the presumption of his brothers."

The sultana Ayxa was secretly apprised of the cruel design of the old monarch. She was a woman of talents and courage, and, by means of her female attendants, concerted a plan for the escape of her son. A faithful servant was instructed to wait below the Alhambra, in the dead of the night, on the banks of the river Darro, with a fleet Arabian courser. The sultana, when the castle was in a state of deep repose, tied together the shawls and scarfs of herself and her female attendants, and lowered the youthful prince from the tower of Cimares.* He made his way in safety down the steep rocky hill to the banks of the Darro, and, throwing himself on the Arabian courser, was thus spirited off to the city of Guadix in the Alpuxarres. Here he lay for some time concealed, until, gaining adherents, he fortified himself in the place, and set the machinations of his tyrant father at defiance. Such was the state of affairs in the royal household of Granada, when Muley Aben Hassan returned foiled from his expedition against Alhama. The faction, which had secretly formed among the nobles, determined to depose the old king Aben Hassan, and to elevate his son Boabdil to the throne. They concerted their measures with the latter, and an opportunity soon presented to put them in practice. Muley Aben Hassan had a royal country palace called Alixares, in the vicinity of Granada, to which he resorted occasionally to recreate his mind, during this time of perplexity. He had been passing one day among its bowers, when, on returning to the capital, he found the gates closed against him, and his son Mohammed Abdalla, otherwise called Boabdil, proclaimed king. "Allah Achbar! God is great!" exclaimed old Muley Aben Hassan; "it is in vain to contend against what is written in the book of fate. It was predestined, that my son should sit upon the throne—Allah forefend the rest of the prediction!" The old monarch knew the inflammable nature of the Moors, and that it was useless to attempt to check any sudden blaze of popular passion. "A little while," said he,

* Salazar. *Cronica del Gran Cardinal*, cap. 71

"and this rash flame will burn itself out, and the people when cool will listen to reason." So he turned his steed from the gate, and repaired to the city of Baza, where he was received with great demonstrations of loyalty. He was not a man to give up his throne without a struggle. A large part of the kingdom still remained faithful to him; he trusted that the conspiracy in the capital was but transient and partial, and that by suddenly making his appearance in its streets, at the head of a moderate force, he should awe the people again into allegiance. He took his measures with that combination of dexterity and daring which formed his character, and arrived one night under the walls of Granada, with five hundred chosen followers. Scaling the walls of the Alhambra, he threw himself with sanguinary fury into its silent courts. The sleeping inmates were roused from their repose only to fall by the exterminating scimitar. The rage of Aben Hassan spared neither age, nor rank, nor sex; the halls resounded with shrieks and yells, and the fountains ran red with blood. The alcayde, Aben Cimixer, retreated to a strong tower, with a few of the garrison and inhabitants. The furious Aben Hassan did not lose time in pursuing him; he was anxious to secure the city, and to wreak his vengeance on its rebellious inhabitants. Descending with his bloody band into the streets, he cut down the defenceless inhabitants, as, startled from their sleep, they rushed forth to learn the cause of the alarm. The city was soon completely roused; the people flew to arms; lights blazed in every street, revealing the scanty numbers of this band, that had been dealing such fatal vengeance in the dark. Muley Aben Hassan had been mistaken in his conjocures; the great mass of the people, incensed by his tyranny, were zealous in favor of his son. A violent, but transient conflict took place in the streets and squares; many of the followers of Aben Hassan were slain; the rest driven out of the city; and the old monarch, with the remnant of his band, retreated to his loyal city of Malaga.

Such was the commencement of those great internal feuds and divisions, which hastened the downfall of Granada. The Moors became separated into two hostile factions, headed by the father and the son, and several bloody encounters took place between them: yet they never failed to act with all their separate force against the Christians, as a common enemy, whenever an opportunity occurred.

CHAPTER X.

ROYAL EXPEDITION AGAINST LOXA.

KING FERDINAND held a council of war at Cordova, where it was deliberated what was to be done with Alhama. Most of the council advised that it should be demolished, inasmuch as, being in the centre of the Moorish kingdom, it would be at all times liable to attack, and could only be maintained by a powerful garrison and at a vast expense. Queen Isabella arrived at Cordova in the midst of these deliberations, and listened to them with surprise and impatience. "What!" said she, "shall we destroy the first fruits of our victories? shall we abandon the first place we have wrested from the Moors? Never let us suffer such an idea to occupy our minds. It would give new courage to the enemy, arguing fear or feebleness in our councils. You talk of the toil and expense of maintaining Alhama. Did we doubt, on undertaking this war, that it was to be a war of infinite cost, labor, and bloodshed? And shall we shrink from the cost, the moment a victory is obtained, and the question is merely to guard or abandon its glorious trophy? Let us hear no more about the destruction of Alhama; let us maintain its walls sacred, as a strong-hold granted us by Heaven, in the centre of this hostile land; and let our only consideration be how to extend our conquest, and capture the surrounding cities."

The language of the queen infused a more lofty and chivalrous spirit into the royal council. Preparations were immediately made to maintain Alhama at all risk and expense; and king Ferdinand appointed as alcaide Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, Senior of the house of Palma, supported by Diego Lopez de Ayala, Pero Ruiz de Alarcon, and Alonzo Ortis, captains of four hundred lances, and a body of one thousand foot; supplied with provisions for three months.

Ferdinand resolved also to lay siege to Loxa, a city of great strength, at no great distance from Alhama. For this purpose, he called upon all the cities and towns of Andalusia and Estramadura, and the domains of the orders of Santiago, Calatrava, and Alcantara, and of the priory of St. Juan, and the kingdom of Toledo, and beyond to the cities of Salamanca, Tero, and Valladolid, to furnish, according to their repartimientos, or allotments, a certain quantity of bread, wine, and

cattle, to be delivered at the royal camp before Loxa, one-half at the end of June, and one-half in July. These lands, also, together with Biscay and Guipiscoa, were ordered to send reinforcements of horse and foot, each town furnishing its quota; and great diligence was used in providing bombards, powder, and other warlike munitions.

The Moors were no less active in their preparations, and sent missives into Africa, entreating supplies, and calling upon the Barbary princes to aid them in this war of the faith. To intercept all succor, the Castilian sovereigns stationed an armada of ships and galleys in the Straits of Gibraltar, under the command of Martin Diaz de Mina and Carlos de Valera, with orders to scour the Barbary coast, and sweep every Moorish sail from the sea.

While these preparations were making, Ferdinand made an incursion, at the head of his army, into the kingdom of Granada, and laid waste the vega, destroying its hamlets and villages, ravaging the fields of grain, and driving away the cattle.

It was about the end of June, that king Ferdinand departed from Cordova, to sit down before the walls of Loxa. So confident was he of success, that he left a great part of the army at Ecija, and advanced with but five thousand cavalry and eight thousand infantry. The marques of Cadiz, a warrior as wise as he was valiant, remonstrated against employing so small a force, and indeed was opposed to the measure altogether, as being undertaken precipitately and without sufficient preparation. King Ferdinand, however, was influenced by the counsel of Don Diego de Merlo, and was eager to strike a brilliant and decided blow. A vain-glorious confidence prevailed, about this time, among the Spanish cavaliers; they overrated their own prowess, or rather they undervalued and despised their enemy. Many of them believed that the Moors would scarcely remain in their city, when they saw the Christian troops advancing to assail it. The Spanish chivalry, therefore, marched gallantly and fearlessly, and almost carelessly, over the border, scantily supplied with the things needful for a besieging army, in the heart of an enemy's country. In the same negligent and confident spirit, they took up their station before Loxa.

The country around was broken and hilly, so that it was extremely difficult to form a combined camp. The river Xenil, which runs by the town, was compressed between

high banks, and so deep as to be fordable with extreme difficulty; and the Moors had possession of the bridge. The king pitched his tents in a plantation of olives, on the banks of the river; the troops were distributed in different encampments on the heights, but separated from each other by deep rocky ravines, so as to be incapable of yielding each other prompt assistance. There was no room for the operation of the cavalry. The artillery, also, was so injudiciously placed, as to be almost entirely useless. Alonzo of Arragon, duke of Villahermosa, and illegitimate brother of the king, was present at the siege, and disapproved of the whole arrangement. He was one of the most able generals of his time, and especially renowned for his skill in battering fortified places. He recommended that the whole disposition of the camp should be changed, and that several bridges should be thrown across the river. His advice was adopted, but slowly and negligently followed, so that it was rendered of no avail. Among other oversights in this hasty and negligent expedition, the army had no supply of baked bread; and, in the hurry of encampment, there was no time to erect furnaces. Cakes were therefore hastily made, and baked on the coals, and for two days the troops were supplied in this irregular way.

King Ferdinand felt, too late, the insecurity of his position, and endeavored to provide a temporary remedy. There was a height near the city, called by the Moors Santo Albohacen, which was in front of the bridge. He ordered several of his most valiant cavaliers to take possession of this height, and to hold it as a check upon the enemy and a protection to the camp. The cavaliers chosen for this distinguished and perilous post, were, the marques of Cadiz, the marques of Villena, Don Roderigo Tellez Giron, Master of Calatrava, his brother the count of Ureña, and Don Alonzo de Aguilar. These valiant warriors, and tried companions in arms, led their troops with alacrity to the height, which soon glittered with the array of arms, and was graced by several of the most redoubtable persons of warlike Spain.

Loxa was commanded at this time by an old Moorish alcayde, whose daughter was the favorite wife of Boabdil el Chico. The name of this Moor was Ibrahim Ali Atar, but he was generally known among the Spaniards as Alatar. He had grown gray in border warfare, was an implacable enemy of the Christians, and his name had long been the terror of the frontier. He was in the ninetieth year of his

age, yet indomitable in spirit, fiery in his passions, sinewy and powerful in frame, deeply versed in warlike stratagem, and accounted the best lance in all Mauritania. He had three thousand horsemen under his command, veteran troops, with whom he had often scoured the borders; and he daily expected the old Moorish king, with reinforcements.

Old Ali Atar had watched from his fortress every movement of the Christian army, and had exulted in all the errors of its commanders: when he beheld the flower of Spanish chivalry, glittering about the height of Albohacen, his eye flashed with exultation. "By the aid of Allah," said he, "I will give those pranking cavaliers a rouse."

Ali Atar, privately, and by night, sent forth a large body of his chosen troops, to lie in ambush near one of the skirts of Albohacen. On the fourth day of the siege, he sallied across the bridge, and made a feint attack upon the height. The cavaliers rushed impetuously forth to meet him, leaving their encampment almost unprotected. Ali Atar wheeled and fled, and was hotly pursued. When the Christian cavaliers had been drawn a considerable distance from their encampment, they heard a vast shout behind them, and, looking round, beheld their encampment assailed by the Moorish force which had been placed in ambush, and which had ascended a different side of the hill. The cavaliers desisted from the pursuit, and hastened to prevent the plunder of their tents. Ali Atar, in his turn, wheeled and pursued them; and they were attacked in front and rear, on the summit of the hill. The contest lasted for an hour; the height of Albohacen was red with blood; many brave cavaliers fell, expiring among heaps of the enemy. The fierce Ali Atar fought with the fury of a demon, until the arrival of more Christian forces compelled him to retreat into the city. The severest loss to the Christians, in this skirmish, was that of Roderigo Tellez Giron, Master of Calatrava. As he was raising his arm to make a blow, an arrow pierced him, just beneath the shoulder, at the open part of the corselet. He fell instantly from his horse, but was caught by Pedro Gasca, a cavalier of Avila, who conveyed him to his tent, where he died. The king and queen, and the whole kingdom, mourned his death, for he was in the freshness of his youth, being but twenty-four years of age, and had proved himself a gallant and high-minded cavalier. A melancholy group collected about his corse, on the bloody height of Albohacen: the knights of

Calatrava mourned him as a commander; the cavaliers who were encamped on the height, lamented him as their companion in arms, in a service of peril; while the count de Ureña grieved over him with the tender affection of a brother.

King Ferdinand now perceived the wisdom of the opinion of the marques of Cadiz, and that his force was quite insufficient for the enterprise. To continue his camp in its present unfortunate position, would cost him the lives of his bravest cavaliers, if not a total defeat, in case of reinforcements to the enemy. He called a council of war, late in the evening of Saturday; and it was determined to withdraw the army, early the next morning, to Rio Frio, a short distance from the city, and there wait for additional troops from Cordova.

The next morning, early, the cavaliers on the height of Albohacen began to strike their tents. No sooner did Ali Atar behold this, than he sallied forth to attack them. Many of the Christian troops, who had not heard of the intention to change the camp, seeing the tents struck and the Moors sallying forth, supposed that the enemy had been reinforced in the night, and that the army was on the point of retreating. Without stopping to ascertain the truth, or to receive orders, they fled in dismay, spreading confusion through the camp; nor did they halt until they had reached the Rock of the Lovers, about seven leagues from Loxa.*

The king and his commanders saw the imminent peril of the moment, and made face to the Moors, each commander guarding his quarter and repelling all assaults, while the tents were struck and the artillery and ammunition conveyed away. The king, with a handful of cavaliers, galloped to a rising ground, exposed to the fire of the enemy, calling upon the flying troops and endeavoring in vain to rally them. Setting upon the Moors, he and his cavaliers charged them so vigorously, that they put a squadron to flight, slaying many with their swords and lances, and driving others into the river, where they were drowned. The Moors, however, were soon reinforced, and returned in great numbers. The king was in great danger of being surrounded, and twice owed his safety to the valor of Don Juan de Ribera, Senior of Montemayor.

The marques of Cadiz beheld, from a distance, the peril of his sovereign. Summoning about seventy horsemen to follow him, he galloped to the spot, threw himself between the king

* Pulgar. Cronica.

and the enemy, and, hurling his lance, transpierced one of the most daring of the Moors. For some time, he remained with no other weapon than his sword; his horse was wounded by an arrow, and many of his followers slain; but he succeeded in beating off the Moors, and rescuing the king from imminent jeopardy, whom he then prevailed upon to retire to less dangerous ground.

The marques continued, throughout the day, to expose himself to the repeated assaults of the enemy; he was ever found in the place of the greatest danger, and through his bravery a great part of the army and camp was preserved from destruction.*

It was a perilous day for the commanders; for in a retreat of the kind, it is the noblest cavaliers who most expose themselves to save their people. The duke of Medina Celi was struck to the ground, but rescued by his troops. The count de Tendilla, whose tents were nearest to the city, received several wounds, and various other cavaliers of the most distinguished note were exposed to fearful jeopardy. The whole day was passed in bloody skirmishings, in which the hidalgos and cavaliers of the royal household distinguished themselves by their bravery; at length, the encampments being all broken up, and most of the artillery and baggage removed, the bloody height of Albohacen was abandoned, and the neighborhood of Loxa evacuated. Several tents, a quantity of provisions, and a few pieces of artillery, were left upon the spot, from the want of horses and mules to carry them off.

Ali Atar hung upon the rear of the retiring army, and harassed it until it reached Rio Frio; from thence Ferdinand returned to Cordova, deeply mortified, though greatly benefited, by the severe lesson he had received, which served to render him more cautious in his campaigns and more diffident of fortune. He sent letters to all parts, excusing his retreat, imputing it to the small number of his forces, and the circumstance that many of them were quotas sent from various cities, and not in royal pay; in the mean time, to console his troops for their disappointment, and to keep up their spirits, he led them upon another inroad to lay waste the vega of Granada.

* *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 58.

CHAPTER XL.

HOW MULEY ABEN HASSAN MADE A FORAY INTO THE LANDS OF MEDINA SIDONIA, AND HOW HE WAS RECEIVED.

OLD Muley Aben Hassan had mustered an army, and marched to the relief of Loxa; but arrived too late—the last squadron of Ferdinand had already passed over the border. “They have come and gone,” said he, “like a summer cloud, and all their vaunting has been mere empty thunder.” He turned to make another attempt upon Alhama, the garrison of which was in the utmost consternation at the retreat of Ferdinand, and would have deserted the place, had it not been for the courage and perseverance of the alcaide, Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. That brave and loyal commander cheered up the spirits of his men, and kept the old Moorish king at bay, until the approach of Ferdinand, on his second incursion into the vega, obliged him to make an unwilling retreat to Malaga.

Muley Aben Hassan felt that it would be in vain, with his inferior force, to oppose the powerful army of the Christian monarch; but to remain idle and see his territories laid waste, would ruin him in the estimation of his people. “If we cannot parry,” said he, “we can strike; if we cannot keep our own lands from being ravaged, we can ravage the lands of the enemy.” He inquired and learnt that most of the chivalry of Andalusia, in their eagerness for a foray, had marched off with the king, and left their own country almost defenceless. The territories of the duke of Medina Sidonia were particularly unguarded: here were vast plains of pasturage, covered with flocks and herds—the very country for a hasty inroad. The old monarch had a bitter grudge against the duke, for having foiled him at Alhama. “I’ll give this cavalier a lesson,” said he, exultingly, “that will cure him of his love of campaigning.” So he prepared in all haste for a foray into the country about Medina Sidonia.

Muley Aben Hassan sallied out of Malaga with fifteen hundred horse and six thousand foot, and took the way by the sea-coast, marching through Estiponia, and entering the Christian country between Gibraltar and Castellar. The only person that was likely to molest him on this route, was one Pedro de Vargas; a shrewd, hardy, and vigilant soldier, alcaide of Gib-

raltar, and who lay ensconced in his old warrior rock as in a citadel. Muley Aben Hassan knew the watchful and daring character of the man, but had ascertained that his garrison was too small to enable him to make a sally, or at least to insure him any success. Still he pursued his march, with great silence and caution; sent parties in advance, to explore every pass where a foe might lie in ambush; cast many an anxious eye towards the old rock of Gibraltar, as its cloud-capped summit was seen towering in the distance on his left; nor did he feel entirely at ease, until he had passed through the broken and mountainous country of Castellar, and descended into the plains. Here he encamped on the banks of the Celemin. From hence he sent four hundred corredors, or fleet horsemen, armed with lances, who were to station themselves near Algeziras, and to keep a strict watch across the bay, upon the opposite fortress of Gibraltar. If the alcayde attempted to sally forth, they were to waylay and attack him, being almost four times his supposed force; and were to send swift tidings to the camp. In the mean time, two hundred corredors were sent to scour that vast plain called the Campiña de Tarifa, abounding with flocks and herds; and two hundred more were to ravage the lands about Medina Sidonia. Muley Aben Hassan remained with the main body of the army, as a rallying point, on the banks of the Celemin.

The foraging parties scoured the country to such effect, that they came driving vast flocks and herds before them, enough to supply the place of all that had been swept from the vega of Granada. The troops which had kept watch upon the rock of Gibraltar, returned with word that they had not seen a Christian helmet stirring. The old king congratulated himself upon the secrecy and promptness with which he had conducted his foray, and upon having baffled the vigilance of Pedro de Vargas.

Muley Aben Hassan had not been so secret as he imagined; the watchful Pedro de Vargas had received notice of his movements. His garrison was barely sufficient for the defence of the place, and he feared to take the field and leave his fortress unguarded. Luckily, at this juncture, there arrived in the harbor of Gibraltar a squadron of the armed galleys stationed in the Strait, and commanded by Carlos de Valera. The alcayde immediately prevailed upon him to guard the place during his absence, and sallied forth at midnight with seventy horse. He made for the town of Castellar, which was strongly posted on a

steep height, knowing that the Moorish king would have to return by this place. He ordered alarm-fires to be lighted upon the mountains, to give notice that the Moors were on the ravage, that the peasants might drive their flocks and herds to places of refuge; and he sent couriers, riding like mad, in every direction, summoning the fighting men of the neighborhood to meet him at Castellar.

Muley Aben Hassan saw, by the fires blazing about the mountains, that the country was rising. He struck his tents, and pushed forward as rapidly as possible for the border; but he was encumbered with booty, and with the vast *cavalgada* swept from the pastures of the *Campiña de Tarifa*. His scouts brought him word that there were troops in the field, but he made light of the intelligence, knowing that they could only be those of the *alcayde* of Gibraltar, and that he had not more than a hundred horsemen in his garrison. He threw in advance two hundred and fifty of his bravest troops, and with them the *alcaydes* of Marabella and Casares. Behind this vanguard was a great *cavalgada* of cattle; and in the rear marched the king, with the main force of his little army.

It was near the middle of a sultry summer day, that they approached Castellar. De Vargas was on the watch, and beheld, by an immense cloud of dust, that they were descending one of the heights of that wild and broken country. The vanguard and rear-guard were above half a league asunder, with the *cavalgada* between them; and a long and close forest hid them from each other. De Vargas saw that they could render but little assistance to each other in case of a sudden attack, and might be easily thrown in confusion. He chose fifty of his bravest horsemen, and, making a circuit, took his post secretly in a narrow glen opening into a defile between two rocky heights, through which the Moors had to pass. It was his intention to suffer the vanguard and the *cavalgada* to pass, and to fall upon the rear.

While thus lying *perdue*, six Moorish scouts, well mounted and well armed, entered the glen, examining every place that might conceal an enemy. Some of the Christians advised that they should slay these six men, and retreat to Gibraltar. "No," said De Vargas, "I have come out for higher game than these; and I hope, by the aid of God and Santiago, to do good work this day. I know these Moors well, and doubt not but they may readily be thrown into confusion."

By this time, the six horsemen approached so near that they

were on the point of discovering the Christian ambush. De Vargas gave the word, and ten horsemen rushed forth upon them: in an instant, four of the Moors rolled in the dust; the other two put spurs to their steeds, and fled towards their army, pursued by the ten Christians. About eighty of the Moorish vanguard came galloping to the relief of their companions; the Christians turned, and fled towards their ambush. De Vargas kept his men concealed, until the fugitives and their pursuers came clattering pell-mell into the glen. At a signal trumpet, his men sallied forth with great heat and in close array. The Moors almost rushed upon their weapons, before they perceived them; forty of the infidels were overthrown, the rest turned their backs. "Forward!" cried De Vargas; "let us give the vanguard a brush, before it can be joined by the rear." So saying, he pursued the flying Moors down hill, and came with such force and fury upon the advance guard as to overturn many of them at the first encounter. As he wheeled off with his men, the Moors discharged their lances; upon which he returned to the charge, and made great slaughter. The Moors fought valiantly for a short time, until the alcaides of Marabella and Casares were slain, when they gave way and fled for the rear-guard. In their flight, they passed through the cavalgada of cattle, threw the whole in confusion, and raised such a cloud of dust that the Christians could no longer distinguish objects. • Fearing that the king and the main body might be at hand, and finding that De Vargas was badly wounded, they contented themselves with despoiling the slain and taking above twenty-eight horses, and then retreated to Castellar.

When the routed Moors came flying back upon the rear-guard, Muley Aben Hassan feared that the people of Xeres were in arms. Several of his followers advised him to abandon the cavalgada, and retreat by another road. "No," said the old king, "he is no true soldier who gives up his booty without fighting." Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped forward through the centre of the cavalgada, driving the cattle to the right and left. When he reached the field of battle, he found it strewn with the bodies of upwards of one hundred Moors, among which were those of the two alcaides. Enraged at the sight, he summoned all his cross-bowmen and cavalry, pushed on to the very gates of Castellar, and set fire to two houses close to the walls. Pedro de Vargas was too severely wounded to sally forth in person; but he ordered out his troops, and there

was brisk skirmishing under the walls, until the king drew off and returned to the scene of the recent encounter. Here he had the bodies of the principal warriors laid across mules, to be interred honorably at Malaga; the rest of the slain were buried on the field of battle. Then, gathering together the scattered cavalgada, he paraded it slowly, in an immense line, past the walls of Castellar, by way of taunting his foe.

With all his fierceness, old Muley Aben Hassan had a gleam of warlike courtesy, and admired the hardy and soldierlike character of Pedro de Vargas. He summoned two Christian captives, and demanded what were the revenues of the alcajde of Gibraltar. They told him that, among other things, he was entitled to one out of every drove of cattle that passed his boundaries. "Allah forbid," cried the old monarch, "that so brave a cavalier should be defrauded of his dues."

He immediately chose twelve of the finest cattle, from the twelve droves which formed the cavalgada. These he gave in charge of an alfaqui, to deliver to Pedro de Vargas. "Tell him," said he, "that I crave his pardon for not having sent these cattle sooner; but I have this moment learnt the nature of his rights, and I hasten to satisfy them, with the punctuality due to so worthy a cavalier. Tell him, at the same time, that I had no idea the alcajde of Gibraltar was so active and vigilant in collecting his tolls."

The brave alcajde relished the stern, soldierlike pleasantry of the old Moorish monarch. He ordered a rich silken vest, and a scarlet mantle, to be given to the alfaqui, and dismissed him with great courtesy. "Tell his majesty," said he, "that I kiss his hands for the honor he has done me, and regret that my scanty force has not permitted me to give him a more signal reception, on his coming into these parts. Had three hundred horsemen, whom I have been promised from Xeres, arrived in time, I might have served up an entertainment more befitting such a monarch. I trust, however, they will arrive in the course of the night, in which case his majesty may be sure of a royal regale at the dawning."

Muley Aben Hassan shook his head, when he received the reply of De Vargas. "Allah preserve us," said he, "from any visitation of these hard riders of Xeres! a handful of troops, acquainted with the wild passes of these mountains, may destroy an army encumbered as ours is with booty."

It was some relief to the king, however, to learn that the hardy alcajde of Gibraltar was too severely wounded to take

the field in person. He immediately beat a retreat, with all speed, before the close of day, hurrying with such precipitation, that the cavalgada was frequently broken, and scattered among the rugged defiles of the mountains; and above five thousand of the cattle turned back, and were regained by the Christians. Muley Aben Hassan returned triumphantly with the residue to Malaga, glorying in the spoils of the duke of Medina Sidonia.

King Ferdinand was mortified at finding his incursion into the vega of Granada, counterbalanced by this inroad into his dominions, and saw that there were two sides to the game of war, as to all other games. The only one who reaped real glory in this series of inroads and skirmishings, was Pedro de Vargas, the stout alcaide of Gibraltar.*

CHAPTER XII.

FORAY OF SPANISH CAVALIERS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF MALAGA.

THE foray of old Muley Aben Hassan had touched the pride of the Andalusian chivalry, and they determined on retaliation. For this purpose a number of the most distinguished cavaliers assembled at Antiquera, in the month of March, 1483. The leaders of the enterprise were, the gallant marques of Cadiz; Don Pedro Henriquez, adelantado of Andalusia; Don Juan de Silva, count of Cifuentes, and bearer of the royal standard, who commanded in Seville; Don Alonzo de Cardenas, Master of the religious and military order of Santiago; and Don Alonzo de Aguilar. Several other cavaliers of note hastened to take part in the enterprise; and in a little while, about twenty-seven hundred horse, and several companies of foot, were assembled within the old warlike city of Antiquera, comprising the very flower of Andalusian chivalry.

A council of war was held by the chiefs, to determine in what quarter they should strike a blow. The rival Moorish kings were waging civil war with each other, in the vicinity of Granada; and the whole country lay open to inroads. Various

* Alonzo de Palenecla, l. 28, c. 8.

plans were proposed by the different cavaliers. The marques of Cadiz was desirous of scaling the walls of Zahara, and regaining possession of that important fortress. The Master of Santiago, however, suggested a wider range and a still more important object. He had received information from his adalides, who were apostate Moors, that an incursion might be safely made into a mountainous region near Malaga, called the Axarquia. Here were valleys of pasture land, well stocked with flocks and herds; and there were numerous villages and hamlets, which would be an easy prey. The city of Malaga was too weakly garrisoned, and had too few cavalry, to send forth any force in opposition; nay, he added, they might even extend their ravages to its very gates, and peradventure carry that wealthy place by sudden assault.

The adventurous spirits of the cavaliers were inflamed by this suggestion; in their sanguine confidence, they already beheld Malaga in their power, and they were eager for the enterprise. The marques of Cadiz endeavored to interpose a little cool caution. He likewise had apostate adalides, the most intelligent and experienced on the borders; among these, he placed especial reliance on one named Luis Amar, who knew all the mountains and valleys of the country. He had received from him a particular account of these mountains of the Axarquia.* Their savage and broken nature was a sufficient defence for the fierce people who inhabited them, who, manning their rocks, and their tremendous passes, which were often nothing more than the deep dry beds of torrents, might set whole armies at defiance. Even if vanquished, they afforded no spoil to the victor. Their houses were little better than bare walls, and they would drive off their scanty flocks and herds to the fastnesses of the mountains.

The sober counsel of the marques, however, was overruled. The cavaliers, accustomed to mountain warfare, considered themselves and their horses equal to any wild and rugged expedition, and were flushed with the idea of terminating their foray by a brilliant assault upon Malaga.

Leaving all heavy baggage at Antiquera, and all such as had horses too weak for this mountain scramble, they set forth, full of spirit and confidence Don Alonzo de Aguilar,

* Pulgar, in his Chronicle, reverses the case, and makes the marques of Cadiz recommend the expedition to the Axarquia; but Fray Antonio Agapida is supported in his statement by that most veracious and contemporary chronicler Andres Bernaldes, curate of Los Palacios.

and the adelantado of Andalusia, led the squadron of advance. The count of Cifuentes followed, with certain of the chivalry of Seville. Then came the battalion of the most valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz; he was accompanied by several of his brothers and nephews, and many cavaliers, who sought distinction under his banner; and this family band attracted universal attention and applause, as they paraded in martial state through the streets of Antiquera. The rear-guard was led by Don Alonzo Cardenas, Master of Santiago, and was composed of the knights of his order, and the cavaliers of Ecija, with certain men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood, whom the king had placed under his command. The army was attended by a great train of mules, laden with provisions for a few days' supply, until they should be able to forage among the Moorish villages. Never did a more gallant and self-confident little army tread the earth. It was composed of men full of health and vigor, to whom war was a pastime and delight. They had spared no expense in their equipments, for never was the pomp of war carried to a higher pitch than among the proud chivalry of Spain. Cased in armor richly inlaid and embossed, decked with rich surcoats and waving plumes, and superbly mounted on Andalusian steeds, they pranced out of Antiquera with banners flying, and their various devices and armorial bearings ostentatiously displayed; and in the confidence of their hopes, promised the inhabitants to enrich them with the spoils of Malaga.

In the rear of this warlike pageant, followed a peaceful band, intent upon profiting by the anticipated victories. They were not the customary wretches that hover about armies to plunder and strip the dead, but goodly and substantial traders from Seville, Cordova, and other cities of traffic. They rode sleek mules, and were clad in goodly raiment, with long leathern purses at their girdles, well filled with pistoles and other golden coin. They had heard of the spoils wasted by the soldiery at the capture of Alhama, and were provided with moneys to buy up the jewels and precious stones, the vessels of gold and silver, and the rich silks and cloths, that should form the plunder of Malaga. The proud cavaliers eyed these sons of traffic with great disdain, but permitted them to follow for the convenience of the troops, who might otherwise be overburthened with booty.

It had been intended to conduct this expedition with great celerity and secrecy; but the noise of their preparations had

already reached the city of Malaga. The garrison, it is true, was weak; but it possessed a commander who was himself a host. This was Muley Abdallah, commonly called El Zagal, or the valiant. He was younger brother of Muley Aben Hassan, and general of the few forces which remained faithful to the old monarch. He possessed equal fierceness of spirit with his brother and surpassed him in craft and vigilance. His very name was a war-cry among his soldiery, who had the most extravagant opinion of his prowess.

El Zagal suspected that Malaga was the object of this noisy expedition. He consulted with old Bexir, a veteran Moor, who governed the city. "If this army of marauders should reach Malaga," said he, "we should hardly be able to keep them without its walls. I will throw myself, with a small force, into the mountains; rouse the peasantry, take possession of the passes, and endeavor to give these Spanish cavaliers sufficient entertainment upon the road."

It was on a Wednesday, that the pranking army of high-mettled warriors issued forth from the ancient gates of Antiquera. They marched all day and night, making their way, secretly as they supposed, through the passes of the mountains. As the tract of country they intended to maraud was far in the Moorish territories, near the coast of the Mediterranean, they did not arrive there until late in the following day. In passing through these stern and lofty mountains, their path was often along the bottom of a barranco, or deep rocky valley, with a scanty stream dashing along it, among the loose rocks and stones, which it had broken and rolled down, in the time of its autumnal violence. Sometimes their road was a mere rambla, or dry bed of a torrent, cut deep into the mountain and filled with their shattered fragments. These barrancos and ramblas were overhung by immense cliffs and precipices; forming the lurking-places of ambuscades, during the wars between the Moors and Spaniards, as in after-times they have become the favorite haunts of robbers to way-lay the unfortunate traveller.

As the sun went down, the cavaliers came to a lofty part of the mountains, commanding to the right a distant glimpse of a part of the fair vega of Malaga, with the blue Mediterranean beyond, and they hailed it with exultation, as a glimpse of the promised land. As the night closed in, they reached the chain of little valleys and hamlets, locked up among these rocky heights, and known among the Moors by the name of

the Axarquía. Here their vaunting hopes were destined to meet with the first disappointment. The inhabitants had heard of their approach; they had conveyed away their cattle and effects, and, with their wives and children, had taken refuge in the towers and fastnesses of the mountains.

Enraged at their disappointment, the troop set fire to the deserted houses, and pressed forward, hoping for better fortune as they advanced. Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and the other cavaliers in the vanguard, spread out their forces to lay waste the country; capturing a few lingering herds of cattle, with the Moorish peasants who were driving them to some place of safety.

While this marauding party carried fire and sword in the advance, and lit up the mountain cliffs with the flames of the hamlets, the Master of Santiago, who brought up the rear-guard, maintained strict order, keeping his knights together in martial array, ready for attack or defence, should an enemy appear. The men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood attempted to roam in quest of booty; but he called them back, and rebuked them severely.

At length they came to a part of the mountain completely broken up by barrancos and ramblas, of vast depth, and shagged with rocks and precipices. It was impossible to maintain the order of march; the horses had no room for action, and were scarcely manageable, having to scramble from rock to rock, and up and down frightful declivities, where there was scarce footing for a mountain goat. Passing by a burning village, the light of the flames revealed their perplexed situation. The Moors, who had taken refuge in a watch-tower on an impending height, shouted with exultation, when they looked down upon these glistening cavaliers struggling and stumbling among the rocks. Sallying forth from their tower, they took possession of the cliffs which overhung the ravine, and hurled darts and stones upon the enemy. It was with the utmost grief of heart that the good Master of Santiago beheld his brave men falling like helpless victims around him, without the means of resistance or revenge. The confusion of his followers was increased by the shouts of the Moors, multiplied by the echoes of every crag and cliff, as if they were surrounded by innumerable foes. Being entirely ignorant of the country, in their struggles to extricate themselves they plunged into other glens and defiles, where they were still more exposed to danger. In this extremity, the Master of Santiago dis-

patched messengers in search of succor. The marques of Cadiz, like a loyal companion in arms, hastened to his aid with his cavalry; his approach checked the assaults of the enemy, and the Master was at length enabled to extricate his troops from the defile.

In the mean time, Don Alonzo de Aguilar and his companions, in their eager advance, had likewise got entangled in deep glens, and the dry beds of torrents, where they had been severely galled by the insulting attacks of a handful of Moorish peasants, posted on the impending precipices. The proud spirit of De Aguilar was incensed at having the game of war thus turned upon him, and his gallant forces domineered over by mountain boors, whom he had thought to drive, like their own cattle, to Antiquera. Hearing, however, that his friend the marques of Cadiz, and the Master of Santiago, were engaged with the enemy, he disregarded his own danger, and, calling together his troops, returned to assist them, or rather to partake their perils. Being once more assembled together, the cavaliers held a hasty council, amidst the hurling of stones and the whistling of arrows; and their resolves were quickened by the sight, from time to time, of some gallant companion in arms laid low. They determined that there was no spoil in this part of the country, to repay for the extraordinary peril; and that it was better to abandon the herds they had already taken, which only embarrassed their march, and to retreat with all speed to less dangerous ground.

The adalides, or guides, were ordered to lead the way out of this place of carnage. These, thinking to conduct them by the most secure route, led them by a steep and rocky pass, difficult for the foot-soldiers, but almost impracticable to the cavalry. It was overhung with precipices, from whence showers of stones and arrows were poured upon them, accompanied by savage yells, which appalled the stoutest heart. In some places, they could pass but one at a time, and were often transpierced, horse and rider, by the Moorish darts, impeding the progress of their comrades by their dying struggles. The surrounding precipices were lit up by a thousand alarm-fires; every crag and cliff had its flame, by the light of which they beheld their foes, bounding from rock to rock, and looking more like fiends than mortal men.

Either through terror and confusion, or through real ignorance of the country, their guides, instead of conducting them out of the mountains, led them deeper into their fatal recesses.

The morning dawned upon them in a narrow rambla, its bottom formed of broken rocks, where once had raved along the mountain torrent; while above, there beetled great arid cliffs, over the brows of which they beheld the turbaned heads of their fierce and exulting foes. What a different appearance did the unfortunate cavaliers present, from that of the gallant band that marched so vauntingly out of Antiquera! Covered with dust, and blood, and wounds, and haggard with fatigue and horror, they looked like victims rather than like warriors. Many of their banners were lost, and not a trumpet was heard to rally up their sinking spirits. The men turned with imploring eyes to their commanders; while the hearts of the cavaliers were ready to burst with rage and grief, at the merciless havoc made among their faithful followers.

All day, they made ineffectual attempts to extricate themselves from the mountains. Columns of smoke rose from the heights, where, in the preceding night, had blazed the alarm-fire. The mountaineers assembled from every direction; they swarmed at every pass, getting in the advance of the Christians, and garrisoning the cliffs like so many towers and battlements.

Night closed again upon the Christians, when they were shut up in a narrow valley traversed by a deep stream, and surrounded by precipices which seemed to reach the skies, and on which blazed and flared the alarm-fires. Suddenly a new cry was heard resounding along the valley: "El Zagal! El Zagal!" echoed from cliff to cliff. "What cry is that?" said the Master of Santiago. "It is the war-cry of El Zagal, the Moorish general," said an old Castilian soldier: "he must be coming in person, with the troops of Malaga."

The worthy Master turned to his knights: "Let us die," said he, "making a road with our hearts, since we cannot with our swords. Let us scale the mountain, and sell our lives dearly, instead of staying here to be tamely butchered."

So saying, he turned his steed against the mountain, and spurred him up its flinty side. Horse and foot followed his example, eager, if they could not escape, to have at least a dying blow at the enemy. As they struggled up the height, a tremendous storm of darts and stones was showered upon them by the Moors. Sometimes a fragment of rock came bounding and thundering down, ploughing its way through the centre of their host. The foot-soldiers, faint with weariness and hunger, or crippled by wounds, held by the tails and

manes of the horses to aid them in their ascent; while the horses, losing their foothold among the loose stones, or receiving some sudden wound, tumbled down the steep declivity, steed, rider, and soldier, rolling from crag to crag, until they were dashed to pieces in the valley. In this desperate struggle, the alferéz or standard-bearer of the Master, with his standard, was lost; as were many of his relations and his dearest friends. At length he succeeded in attaining the crest of the mountain; but it was only to be plunged in new difficulties. A wilderness of rocks and rugged dells lay before him, beset by cruel foes. Having neither banner nor trumpet by which to rally his troops, they wandered apart, each intent upon saving himself from the precipices of the mountains, and the darts of the enemy. When the pious Master of Santiago beheld the scattered fragments of his late gallant force, he could not restrain his grief. "O God!" exclaimed he, "great is thine anger this day against thy servants. Thou hast converted the cowardice of these infidels into desperate valor, and hast made peasants and boors victorious over armed men of battle."

He would fain have kept with his foot-soldiers, and, gathering them together, have made head against the enemy; but those around him entreated him to think only of his personal safety. To remain was to perish, without striking a blow; to escape was to preserve a life that might be devoted to vengeance on the Moors. The Master reluctantly yielded to the advice. "O Lord of hosts!" exclaimed he again, "from thy wrath do I fly; not from these infidels; they are but instruments in thy hands, to chastise us for our sins." So saying, he sent the guides in the advance, and putting spurs to his horse, dashed through a defile of the mountains, before the Moors could intercept him. The moment the Master put his horse to speed, his troops scattered in all directions. Some endeavored to follow his traces, but were confounded among the intricacies of the mountain. They fled hither and thither, many perishing among the precipices, others being slain by the Moors, and others taken prisoners.

The gallant marques of Cadiz, guided by his trusty adalid, Luis Amar, had ascended a different part of the mountain. He was followed by his friend, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, the adelantado, and the count of Cifuentes; but, in the darkness and confusion, the bands of these commanders became separated from each other. When the marques attained the sum-

mit, he looked around for his companions in arms, but they were no longer following him, and there was no trumpet to summon them. It was a consolation to the marques, however, that his brothers, and several of his relations, with a number of his retainers, were still with him: he called his brothers by name, and their replies gave comfort to his heart.

His guide now led the way into another valley, where he would be less exposed to danger: when he had reached the bottom of it, the marques paused to collect his scattered followers, and to give time for his fellow-commanders to rejoin him. Here he was suddenly assailed by the troops of El Zagal, aided by the mountaineers from the cliffs. The Christians, exhausted and terrified, lost all presence of mind: most of them fled, and were either slain or taken captive. The marques and his valiant brothers, with a few tried friends, made a stout resistance. His horse was killed under him; his brothers, Don Diego and Don Lope, with his two nephews, Don Lorenzo and Don Manuel, were one by one swept from his side, either transfixed with darts and lances by the soldiers of El Zagal, or crushed by stones from the heights. The marques was a veteran warrior, and had been in many a bloody battle; but never before had death fallen so thick and close around him. When he saw his remaining brother, Don Beltram, struck out of his saddle by a fragment of a rock, and his horse running wildly about without his rider, he gave a cry of anguish, and stood bewildered and aghast. A few faithful followers surrounded him, and entreated him to fly for his life. He would still have remained, to have shared the fortunes of his friend Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and his other companions in arms; but the forces of El Zagal were between him and them, and death was whistling by on every wind. Reluctantly, therefore, he consented to fly. Another horse was brought him: his faithful adalid guided him by one of the steepest paths, which lasted for four leagues; the enemy still hanging on his traces, and thinning the scanty ranks of his followers. At length the marques reached the extremity of the mountain defiles, and, with a haggard remnant of his men, escaped by dint of hoof to Antiquera.

The count of Cifuentes, with a few of his retainers, in attempting to follow the marques of Cadiz, wandered into a narrow pass, where they were completely surrounded by the band of El Zagal. Finding all attempts at escape impossible, and resistance vain, the worthy count surrendered himself

prisoner, as did also his brother Don Pedro de Silva, and the few of his retainers who survived.

The dawn of day found Don Alonzo de Aguilar, with a handful of his followers, still among the mountains. They had attempted to follow the marques of Cadiz, but had been obliged to pause and defend themselves against the thickening forces of the enemy. They at length traversed the mountain, and reached the same valley where the marques had made his last disastrous stand. Wearied and perplexed, they sheltered themselves in a natural grotto, under an overhanging rock, which kept off the darts of the enemy; while a bubbling fountain gave them the means of slaking their raging thirst, and refreshing their exhausted steeds. As day broke, the scene of slaughter unfolded its horrors. There lay the noble brothers and nephews of the gallant marques, transfixed with darts, or gashed and bruised with unseemly wounds; while many other gallant cavaliers lay stretched out dead and dying around, some of them partly stripped and plundered by the Moors. De Aguilar was a pious knight, but his piety was not humble and resigned, like that of the worthy Master of Santiago. He imprecated holy curses upon the infidels, for having thus laid low the flower of Christian chivalry; and he vowed in his heart bitter vengeance upon the surrounding country.

By degrees, the little force of De Aguilar was augmented by numbers of fugitives, who issued from caves and chasms, where they had taken refuge in the night. A little band of mounted knights was gradually formed; and the Moors having abandoned the heights to collect the spoils of the slain, this gallant but forlorn squadron was enabled to retreat to Antiquera.

This disastrous affair lasted from Thursday evening, throughout Friday, the twenty-first of March, the festival of St. Benedict. It is still recorded in Spanish calendars, as the defeat of the mountains of Malaga; and the spot where the greatest slaughter took place, is pointed out to the present day, and is called *la Cuesta de la Matanza*, or The Hill of the Massacre. The principal leaders who survived, returned to Antiquera. Many of the knights took refuge in Alhama, and other towns; many wandered about the mountains for eight days, living on roots and herbs, hiding themselves during the day, and sallying forth at night. So enfeebled and disheartened were they, that they offered no resistance if attacked. Three or four soldiers would surrender to a Moorish peasant; and even the

women of Malaga sallied forth and made prisoners. Some were thrown into the dungeons of frontier towns, others led captive to Granada; but by far the greater number were conducted to Malaga, the city they had threatened to attack. Two hundred and fifty principal cavaliers, alcaydes, commanders, and hidalgos, of generous blood, were confined in the Alcazaba, or citadel of Malaga, to await their ransom; and five hundred and seventy of the common soldiery were crowded in an enclosure or court-yard of the Alcazaba, to be sold as slaves.*

Great spoils were collected of splendid armor and weapons taken from the slain, or thrown away by the cavaliers in their flight; and many horses, magnificently caparisoned, together with numerous standards—all which were paraded in triumph in the Moorish towns.

The merchants also, who had come with the army, intending to traffic in the spoils of the Moors, were themselves made objects of traffic. Several of them were driven like cattle, before the Moorish viragos, to the market of Malaga; and in spite of all their adroitness in trade, and their attempts to buy themselves off at a cheap ransom, they were unable to purchase their freedom without such draughts upon their money-bags at home, as drained them to the very bottom.

CHAPTER XIII.

EFFECTS OF THE DISASTERS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF MALAGA.

THE people of Antiquera had scarcely recovered from the tumult of excitement and admiration, caused by the departure of the gallant band of cavaliers upon their foray, when they beheld the scattered wrecks flying for refuge to their walls. Day after day, and hour after hour, brought some wretched fugitive, in whose battered plight, and haggard, wobegone demeanor, it was almost impossible to recognize the warrior whom they had lately seen to issue so gaily and gloriously from their gates.

The arrival of the marques of Cadiz, almost alone, covered with dust and blood, his armor shattered and defaced, his coun-

* Cura de los Palacios.

tenance the picture of despair, filled every heart with sorrow, for he was greatly beloved by the people. The multitude asked where was the band of brothers which had rallied round him as he went forth to the field; and when they heard that they had, one by one, been slaughtered at his side, they hushed their voices, or spake to each other only in whispers as he passed, gazing at him in silent sympathy. No one attempted to console him in so great an affliction, nor did the good marques speak ever a word, but, shutting himself up, brooded in lonely anguish over his misfortune. It was only the arrival of Don Alonzo de Aguilar that gave him a gleam of consolation, for amidst the shafts of death that had fallen so thickly among his family, he rejoiced to find that his chosen friend and brother in arms had escaped uninjured.

For several days every eye was turned, in an agony of suspense, towards the Moorish border, anxiously looking, in every fugitive from the mountains, for the lineaments of some friend or relation, whose fate was yet a mystery. At length every hope and doubt subsided into certainty; the whole extent of this great calamity was known, spreading grief and consternation throughout the land, and laying desolate the pride and hopes of palaces. It was a sorrow that visited the marble hall and silken pillow. Stately dames mourned over the loss of their sons, the joy and glory of their age; and many a fair cheek was blanched with wo, that had lately mantled with secret admiration. "All Andalusia," says a historian of the time, "was overwhelmed by a great affliction; there was no drying of the eyes which wept in her."*

Fear and trembling reigned, for a time, along the frontier. Their spear seemed broken, their buckler cleft in twain; every border town dreaded an attack, and the mother caught her infant to her bosom when the watch-dog howled in the night, fancying it the war-cry of the Moor. All, for a time, seemed lost; and despondency even found its way to the royal breasts of Ferdinand and Isabella, amidst the splendors of their court.

Great, on the other hand, was the joy of the Moors, when they saw whole legions of Christian warriors brought captive into their towns, by rude mountain peasantry. They thought it the work of Allah in favor of the faithful. But when they recognized, among the captives thus dejected and broken down, some of the proudest of Christian chivalry; when they saw

* *Cura de los Palacios.*

several of the banners and devices of the noblest houses of Spain, which they had been accustomed to behold in the foremost of the battle, now trailed ignominiously through their streets; when, in short, they witnessed the arrival of the count of Cifuentes, the royal standard-bearer of Spain, with his gallant brother Don Pedro de Silva, brought prisoners into the gates of Granada, there were no bounds to their exultation. They thought that the days of their ancient glory were about to return, and that they were to renew their career of triumph over the unbelievers.

The Christian historians of the time are sorely perplexed to account for this misfortune; and why so many Christian knights, fighting in the cause of the holy faith, should thus miraculously, as it were, be given captive to a handful of infidel boors; for we are assured, that all this rout and destruction was effected by five hundred foot and fifty horse, and those mere mountaineers, without science or discipline.* "It was intended," observes one historiographer, "as a lesson to their confidence and vain-glory; overrating their own prowess, and thinking that so chosen a band of chivalry had but to appear in the land of the enemy, and conquer. It was to teach them that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that God alone giveth the victory."

The worthy father Fray Antonio Agapida, however, asserts it to be a punishment for the avarice of the Spanish warriors. They did not enter the kingdom of the infidels with the pure spirit of Christian knights, zealous only for the glory of the faith, but rather as greedy men of traffic, to enrich themselves by vending the spoils of the infidels. Instead of preparing themselves by confession and communion, and executing their testaments, and making donations and bequests to churches and convents, they thought only of arranging bargains and sales of their anticipated booty. Instead of taking with them holy monks to aid them with their prayers, they were followed by a train of trading men, to keep alive their worldly and sordid ideas, and to turn what ought to be holy triumphs into scenes of brawling traffic. Such is the opinion of the excellent Agapida, in which he is joined by that most worthy and upright of chroniclers, the curate of Los Palacios. Agapida comforts himself, however, with the reflection, that this visitation was meant in mercy, to try the Castilian heart, and to

† Cura de los Palacios.

extract, from its present humiliation, the elements of future success, as gold is extracted from amidst the impurities of earth; and in this reflection he is supported by the venerable historian Pedro Abarca, of the society of Jesuits.*

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW KING BOABDIL EL CHICO MARCHED OVER THE BORDER.

THE defeat of the Christian cavaliers among the mountains of Malaga, and the successful inroad of Muley Aben Hassan into the lands of Medina Sidonia, had produced a favorable effect on the fortunes of the old monarch. The inconstant populace began to shout forth his name in the streets, and to sneer at the inactivity of his son Boabdil el Chico. The latter, though in the flower of his age, and distinguished for vigor and dexterity in jousts and tournaments, had never yet fleshed his weapon in the field of battle; and it was murmured that he preferred the silken repose of the cool halls of the Alhambra, to the fatigue and danger of the foray, and the hard encampments of the mountains.

The popularity of these rival kings depended upon their success against the Christians, and Boabdil el Chico found it necessary to strike some signal blow to counterbalance the late triumph of his father. He was further incited by the fierce old Moor, his father-in-law, Ali Atar, alcaide of Loxa, with whom the coals of wrath against the Christians still burned among the ashes of age, and had lately been blown into a flame by the attack made by Ferdinand on the city under his command.

Ali Atar informed Boabdil that the late discomfiture of the Christian knights had stripped Andalusia of the prime of her chivalry, and broken the spirit of the country. All the frontier of Cordova and Ecija now lay open to inroad; but he especially pointed out the city of Lucena as an object of attack, being feebly garrisoned, and lying in a country rich in pasturage, abounding in cattle and grain, in oil and wine. The fiery old Moor spoke from thorough information; for he had made many

* Abarca. *Annales de Aragon*, Rey 30, cap. 2, § 7.

an incursion into these parts, and his very name was a terror throughout the country. It had become a by-word in the garrison of Loxa to call Lucena the garden of Ali Atar, for he was accustomed to forage its fertile territories for all his supplies.

Boabdil el Chico listened to the persuasions of this veteran of the borders. He assembled a force of nine thousand foot and seven hundred horse, most of them his own adherents, but many the partisans of his father; for both factions, however they might fight among themselves, were ready to unite in any expedition against the Christians. Many of the most illustrious and valiant of the Moorish nobility assembled round his standard, magnificently arrayed in sumptuous armor and rich embroidery, as though they were going to a festival or a tilt of canes, rather than an enterprise of iron war. Boabdil's mother, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, armed him for the field, and gave him her benediction as she girded his scimitar to his side. His favorite wife Morayma wept, as she thought of the evils that might befall him. "Why dost thou weep, daughter of Ali Atar?" said the high-minded Ayxa: "these tears become not the daughter of a warrior, nor the wife of a king. Believe me, there lurks more danger for a monarch within the strong walls of a palace, than within the frail curtains of a tent. It is by perils in the field, that thy husband must purchase security on his throne."

But Morayma still hung upon his neck, with tears and sad forebodings; and when he departed from the Alhambra, she betook herself to her mirador, which looks out over the vega. From thence she watched the army, as it went, in shining order, along the road which leads to Loxa; and every burst of warlike melody that came swelling on the breeze, was answered by a gush of sorrow.

As the royal cavalcade issued from the palace and descended through the streets of Granada, the populace greeted their youthful sovereign with shouts, and anticipated success that should wither the laurels of his father. In passing through the gate of Elvira, however, the king accidentally broke his lance against the arch. At this, certain of his nobles turned pale, and entreated him to turn back, for they regarded it as an evil omen. Boabdil scoffed at their fears, for he considered them mere idle fancies; or rather, (says Fray Antonio Agapida,) he was an incredulous pagan, puffed up with confidence and vain-glory. He refused to take another spear, but drew

forth his scimitar, and led the way (adds Agapida) in an arrogant and haughty style, as though he would set both heaven and earth at defiance. Another evil omen was sent, to deter him from his enterprise; arriving at the *rambla*, or dry ravine of Beyro, which is scarcely a bow-shot from the city, a fox ran through the whole army, and close by the person of the king; and, though a thousand bolts were discharged at it, escaped uninjured to the mountains. The principal courtiers about Boabdil now reiterated their remonstrances against proceeding; for they considered these occurrences as mysterious portents of disasters to their army; the king, however, was not to be dismayed, but continued to march forward.*

At Loxa, the royal army was reinforced by old Ali Atar, with the chosen horsemen of his garrison, and many of the bravest warriors of the border towns. The people of Loxa shouted with exultation, when they beheld Ali Atar, armed at all points, and once more mounted on his Barbary steed, which had often borne him over the borders. The veteran warrior, with nearly a century of years upon his head, had all the fire and animation of youth, at the prospect of a foray, and careered from rank to rank with the velocity of an Arab of the desert. The populace watched the army, as it paraded over the bridge, and wound into the passes of the mountains; and still their eyes were fixed upon the pennon of Ali Atar, as if it bore with it an assurance of victory.

The Moorish army entered the Christian frontier by forced marches, hastily ravaging the country, driving off the flocks and herds, and making captives of the inhabitants. They pressed on furiously, and made the latter part of their march in the night, that they might elude observation, and come upon Lucena by surprise. Boabdil was inexperienced in the art of war, but he had a veteran counsellor in his old father-in-law; for Ali Atar knew every secret of the country, and, as he prowled through it, his eye ranged over the land, uniting, in its glare, the craft of the fox with the sanguinary ferocity of the wolf. He had flattered himself that their march had been so rapid as to outstrip intelligence, and that Lucena would be an easy capture; when suddenly he beheld alarm-fires blazing upon the mountains. "We are discovered," said he to Boabdil el Chico; "the country will be up in arms; we have nothing left but to strike boldly for Lucena; it is but slightly

* Marmol. *Rebel. de los Moros*, lib. 1, c. xii. fol. 14.

garrisoned, and we may carry it by assault before it can receive assistance." The king approved of his counsel, and they marched rapidly for the gate of Lucena.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW THE COUNT DE CABRA SALLIED FORTH FROM HIS CASTLE,
IN QUEST OF KING BOABDIL.

DON Diego de Cordova, count of Cabra, was in the castle of Vaena, which, with the town of the same name, is situated on a lofty sun-burnt hill on the frontier of the kingdom of Cordova, and but a few leagues from Lucena. The range of mountains of Horquera lie between them. The castle of Vaena was strong, and well furnished with arms, and the count had a numerous band of vassals and retainers; for it behoved the noblemen of the frontiers, in those times, to be well prepared with man and horse, with lance and buckler, to resist the sudden incursions of the Moors. The count of Cabra was a hardy and experienced warrior, shrewd in council, prompt in action, rapid and fearless in the field. He was one of the bravest cavaliers for an inroad, and had been quickened and sharpened, in thought and action, by living on the borders.

On the night of the 20th of April, 1483, the count was about to retire to rest, when the watchman from the turret brought him word that there were alarm-fires on the mountains of Horquera, and that they were made on the signal-tower overhanging the defile through which the road passes to Cabra and Lucena.

The count ascended the battlement, and beheld five lights blazing on the tower,—a sign that there was a Moorish army attacking some place on the frontier. The count instantly ordered the alarm-bells to be sounded, and dispatched couriers to rouse the commanders of the neighboring towns. He ordered all his retainers to prepare for action, and sent a trumpet through the town, summoning the men to assemble at the castle-gate at daybreak, armed and equipped for the field.

Throughout the remainder of the night, the castle resounded

with a din of preparation. Every house in the town was in equal bustle; for in these frontier towns, every house had its warrior, and the lance and buckler were ever hanging against the wall, ready to be snatched down for instant service. Nothing was heard but the din of armorers, the shoeing of studs, and furbishing up of weapons; and, all night long, the alarm-fires kept blazing on the mountains.

When the morning dawned, the count of Cabra sallied forth, at the head of two hundred and fifty cavaliers, of the best families of Vaena, all well appointed, exercised in arms, and experienced in the warfare of the borders. There were, besides, twelve hundred foot-soldiers, all brave and well seasoned men of the same town. The count ordered them to hasten forward, whoever could make most speed, taking the road to Cabra, which was three leagues distant. That they might not loiter on the road, he allowed none of them to break their fast until they arrived at that place. The provident count dispatched couriers in advance, and the little army, on reaching Cabra, found tables spread with food and refreshments, at the gates of the town. Here they were joined by Don Alonzo de Cordova, Senior of Zuheros.

Having made a hearty repast, they were on the point of resuming their march, when the count discovered, that, in the hurry of his departure from home, he had forgotten to bring the standard of Vaena, which for upwards of eighty years had always been borne to battle by his family. It was now noon, and there was not time to return; he took, therefore, the standard of Cabra, the device of which is a goat, and which had not been seen in the wars for the last half century. When about to depart, a courier came galloping at full speed, bringing missives to the count from his nephew, Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova, Senior of Lucena and alcaide de los Donzeles, entreating him to hasten to his aid, as his town was beset by the Moorish king Boabdil el Chico, with a powerful army, who were actually setting fire to the gates.

The count put his little army instantly in movement for Lucena, which is only one league from Cabra; he was fired with the idea of having the Moorish king in person to contend with. By the time he reached Lucena, the Moors had desisted from the attack, and were ravaging the surrounding country. He entered the town with a few of his cavaliers, and was received with joy by his nephew, whose whole force consisted but of eighty horse and three hundred foot. Don Diego Fernandez

de Cordova was a young man, yet he was a prudent, careful, and capable officer. Having learnt, the evening before, that the Moors had passed the frontiers, he had gathered within his walls all the women and children from the environs; had armed the men, sent couriers in all directions for succor, and had lighted alarm-fires on the mountains.

Boabdil had arrived with his army at daybreak, and had sent in a message threatening to put the garrison to the sword, if the place were not instantly surrendered. The messenger was a Moor of Granada, named Hamet, whom Don Diego had formerly known: he contrived to amuse him with negotiation, to gain time for succor to arrive. The fierce old Ali Atar, losing all patience, had made an assault upon the town, and stormed like a fury at the gate; but had been repulsed. Another and more serious attack was expected, in the course of the night.

When the count de Cabra had heard this account of the situation of affairs, he turned to his nephew with his usual alacrity of manner, and proposed that they should immediately sally forth in quest of the enemy. The prudent Don Diego remonstrated at the rashness of attacking so great a force with a mere handful of men. "Nephew," said the count, "I came from Vaena with a determination to fight this Moorish king, and I will not be disappointed."

"At any rate," replied Don Diego, "let us wait but two hours, and we shall have reinforcements which have been promised me from Rambla, Santaella, Montilla, and other places in the neighborhood." "If we await these," said the hardy count, "the Moors will be off, and all our trouble will have been in vain. You may await them, if you please; I am resolved on fighting."

The count paused for no reply; but, in his prompt and rapid manner, sallied forth to his men. The young alcaide de los Donzeles, though more prudent than his ardent uncle, was equally brave; he determined to stand by him in his rash enterprise, and, summoning his little force, marched forth to join the count, who was already on the move. They then proceeded together in quest of the enemy.

The Moorish army had ceased ravaging the country, and were not to be seen,—the neighborhood being hilly, and broken with deep ravines. The count dispatched six scouts on horseback to reconnoitre, ordering them to return with all speed when they should have discovered the enemy, and by

no means to engage in skirmishing with stragglers. The scouts, ascending a high hill, beheld the Moorish army in a valley behind it, the cavalry ranged in five battalions keeping guard, while the foot-soldiers were seated on the grass making a repast. They returned immediately with the intelligence.

The count now ordered the troops to march in the direction of the enemy. He and his nephew ascended the hill, and saw that the five battalions of Moorish cavalry had been formed into two, one of about nine hundred lances, the other of about six hundred. The whole force seemed prepared to march for the frontier. The foot-soldiers were already under way, with many prisoners, and a great train of mules and beasts of burden, laden with booty. At a distance was Boabdil el Chico: they could not distinguish his person, but they knew him by his superb white charger, magnificently caparisoned, and by his being surrounded by a numerous guard, sumptuously armed and attired. Old Ali Atar was careering about the valley with his usual impatience, hurrying the march of the loitering troops.

The eyes of the count de Cabra glistened with eager joy, as he beheld the royal prize within his reach. The immense disparity of their forces never entered into his mind. "By Santiago!" said he to his nephew, as they hastened down the hill, "had we waited for more forces, the Moorish king and his army would have escaped us!"

The count now harangued his men, to inspirit them to his hazardous encounter. He told them not to be dismayed at the number of Moors, for God often permitted the few to conquer the many; and he had great confidence, that, through the divine aid, they were that day to achieve a signal victory, which should win them both riches and renown. He commanded that no man should hurl his lance at the enemy, but should keep it in his hands, and strike as many blows with it as he could. He warned them, also, never to shout except when the Moors did; for, when both armies shouted together, there was no perceiving which made the most noise and was the strongest. He desired his uncle Lope de Mendoza, and Diego Cabrera, alcaide of Menica, to alight and enter on foot in the battalion of infantry, to animate them to the combat. He appointed, also, the alcaide of Væna and Diego de Clavijo, a cavalier of his household, to remain in the rear, and not to permit any one to lag behind, either to despoil the dead, or for any other purpose.

Such were the orders given by this most adroit, active, and intrepid cavalier, to his little army, supplying, by admirable sagacity and subtle management, the want of a more numerous force. His orders being given, and all arrangements made, he threw aside his lance, drew his sword, and commanded his standard to be advanced against the enemy.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BATTLE OF LUCENA.

THE Moorish king had descried the Spanish forces at a distance, although a slight fog prevented his seeing them distinctly, and ascertaining their numbers. His old father-in-law, Ali Atar, was by his side, who, being a veteran marauder, was well acquainted with all the standards and armorial bearings of the frontiers. When the king beheld the ancient and long-disused banner of Cabra emerging from the mist, he turned to Ali Atar, and demanded whose ensign it was. The old borderer was for once at a loss, for the banner had not been displayed in battle in his time. "Sire," replied he, after a pause, "I have been considering that standard, but do not know it. It appears to be a dog, which device is borne by the towns of Baeza and Ubeda. If it be so, all Andalusia is in movement against you; for it is not probable that any single commander or community would venture to attack you. I would advise you, therefore, to retire."

The count de Cabra, in winding down the hill towards the Moors, found himself on much lower ground than the enemy: he ordered in all haste that his standard should be taken back, so as to gain the vantage ground. The Moors, mistaking this for a retreat, rushed impetuously towards the Christians. The latter, having gained the height proposed, charged down upon them at the same moment, with the battle-cry of "Santiago!" and, dealing the first blows, laid many of the Moorish cavaliers in the dust.

The Moors, thus checked in their tumultuous assault, were thrown into confusion, and began to give way, the Christians following hard upon them. Boabdil el Chico endeavored to rally them. "Hold! hold! for shame!" cried he; "let us not fly, at

least until we know our enemy." The Moorish chivalry were stung by this reproof, and turned to make front, with the valor of men who feel that they are fighting under their monarch's eye.

At this moment, Lorenzo de Porres, alcajde of Luque, arrived with fifty horse and one hundred foot, sounding an Italian trumpet from among a copse of oak trees, which concealed his force. The quick ear of old Ali Atar caught the note. "That is an Italian trumpet," said he to the king; "the whole world seems in arms against your majesty!"

The trumpet of Lorenzo de Porres was answered by that of the count de Cabra, in another direction, and it seemed to the Moors as if they were between two armies. Don Lorenzo, sallying from among the oaks, now charged upon the enemy: the latter did not wait to ascertain the force of this new foe; the confusion, the variety of alarums, the attacks from opposite quarters, the obscurity of the fog, all conspired to deceive them as to the number of their adversaries. Broken and dismayed, they retreated fighting; and nothing but the presence and remonstrance of the king prevented their retreat from becoming a headlong flight.

This skirmishing retreat lasted for about three leagues. Many were the acts of individual prowess between Christian and Moorish knights, and the way was strewn with the flower of the king's guards and of his royal household. At length they came to the rivulet of Mingonzales, the verdant banks of which were covered with willows and tamarisks. It was swollen by recent rain, and was now a deep and turbid torrent.

Here the king made a courageous stand with a small body of cavalry, while his baggage crossed the stream. None but the choicest and most loyal of his guards stood by their monarch, in this hour of extremity. The foot-soldiers took to flight, the moment they passed the ford; many of the horsemen, partaking of the general panic, gave reins to their steeds and scoured for the frontier. The little host of devoted cavaliers now serried their forces in front of their monarch, to protect his retreat. They fought hand to hand with the Christian warriors, disdaining to yield or to ask for quarter. The ground was covered with the dead and dying. The king, having retreated along the river banks, and gained some distance from the scene of combat, looked back, and saw the loyal band at length give way. They crossed the ford, followed pell-mell

by the enemy, and several of them were struck down into the stream.

The king now dismounted from his white charger, whose color and rich caparison made him too conspicuous, and endeavored to conceal himself among the thickets which fringed the river. A soldier of Lucena, named Martin Hurtado, discovered him, and attacked him with a pike. The king defended himself with scimitar and target, until another soldier assailed him, and he saw a third approaching. Perceiving that further resistance would be vain, he drew back and called upon them to desist, offering them a noble ransom. One of the soldiers rushed forward to seize him, but the king struck him to the earth with a blow of his scimitar.

Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova coming up at this moment, the men said to him, "Señor, here is a Moor that we have taken, who seems to be a man of rank, and offers a large ransom."

"Slaves!" exclaimed king Boabdil, "you have not taken me. I surrender to this cavalier."

Don Diego received him with knightly courtesy. He perceived him to be a person of high rank; but the king concealed his quality, and gave himself out as the son of Aben Aleyzar, a nobleman of the royal household.* Don Diego gave him in charge of five soldiers, to conduct him to the castle of Lucena; then, putting spurs to his horse, he hastened to rejoin the count de Cabra, who was in hot pursuit of the enemy. He overtook him at a stream called Rianaul; and they continued to press on the skirts of the flying army, during the remainder of the day. The pursuit was almost as hazardous as the battle; for, had the enemy at any time recovered from their panic, they might, by a sudden reaction, have overwhelmed the small force of their pursuers. To guard against this peril, the wary count kept his battalion always in close order, and had a body of a hundred chosen lancers in the advance. The Moors kept up a Parthian retreat; several times they turned to make battle; but, seeing this solid body of steeled warriors pressing upon them, they again took to flight.

The main retreat of the army was along the valley watered by the Xenol, and opening through the mountains of Algaringo to the city of Loxa. The alarm-fires of the preceding night had roused the country; every man snatched sword and

* Garibay, lib. 40, c. 81.

buckler from the wall, and the towns and villages poured forth their warriors to harass the retreating foe. Ali Atar kept the main force of the army together, and turned fiercely from time to time upon his pursuers; he was like a wolf, hunted through the country he had often made desolate by his maraudings.

The alarm of this invasion had reached the city of Antiquera, where were several of the cavaliers who had escaped from the carnage in the mountains of Malaga. Their proud minds were festering with their late disgrace, and their only prayer was for vengeance on the infidels. No sooner did they hear of the Moor being over the border, than they were armed and mounted for action. Don Alonzo de Aguilar led them forth;—a small body of but forty horsemen, but all cavaliers of prowess, and thirsting for revenge. They came upon the foe on the banks of the Xenel, where it winds through the valleys of Cordova. The river, swelled by the late rains, was deep and turbulent, and only fordable at certain places. The main body of the army was gathered in confusion on the banks, endeavoring to ford the stream, protected by the cavalry of Ali Atar.

No sooner did the little band of Alonzo de Aguilar come in sight of the Moors, than fury flashed from their eyes. “Remember the mountains of Malaga!” they cried to each other, as they rushed to combat. Their charge was desperate, but was gallantly resisted. A scrambling and bloody fight ensued, hand to hand and sword to sword, sometimes on land, sometimes in the water. Many were lanced on the banks; others, throwing themselves into the river, sunk with the weight of their armor, and were drowned; some, grappling together, fell from their horses, but continued their struggle in the waves, and helm and turban rolled together down the stream. The Moors were far greater in number, and among them were many warriors of rank; but they were disheartened by defeat, while the Christians were excited even to desperation.

Ali Atar alone preserved all his fire and energy amid his reverses. He had been enraged at the defeat of the army, the loss of the king, and the ignominious flight he had been obliged to make through a country which had so often been the scene of his exploits: but to be thus impeded in his flight, and harassed and insulted by a mere handful of warriors, roused the violent passions of the old Moor to perfect frenzy. He had marked Don Alonzo de Aguilar dealing his blows (says Agapida) with the pious vehemence of a righteous knight, who

knows that in every wound inflicted upon the infidels, he is doing God service. Ali Atar spurred his steed along the bank of the river, to come upon Don Alonzo by surprise. The back of the warrior was towards him; and, collecting all his force, the Moor hurled his lance to transfix him on the spot. The lance was not thrown with the usual accuracy of Ali Atar; it tore away a part of the cuirass of Don Alonzo, but failed to inflict a wound. The Moor rushed upon Don Alonzo with his scimitar; but the latter was on the alert, and parried his blow. They fought desperately upon the borders of the river, alternately pressing each other into the stream, and fighting their way again up the bank. Ali Atar was repeatedly wounded; and Don Alonzo, having pity on his age, would have spared his life; he called upon him to surrender. "Never," cried Ali Atar, "to a Christian dog!" The words were scarce out of his mouth, when the sword of Don Alonzo clove his turbaned head, and sank deep into the brain. He fell dead, without a groan; his body rolled into the Xenel, nor was it ever found and recognised.* Thus fell Ali Atar, who had long been the terror of Andalusia. As he had hated and warred upon the Christians all his life, so he died in the very act of bitter hostility.

The fall of Ali Atar put an end to the transient stand of the cavalry. Horse and foot mingled together, in the desperate struggle across the Xenel; and many were trampled down, and perished beneath the waves. Don Alonzo and his band continued to harass them until they crossed the frontier; and every blow, struck home to the Moors, seemed to lighten the load of humiliation and sorrow which had weighed heavy on their hearts.

In this disastrous rout, the Moors lost upwards of five thousand killed and made prisoners; many of whom were of the most noble lineages of Granada: numbers fled to rocks and mountains, where they were subsequently taken.

This battle was called, by some, the battle of Lucena; by others, the battle of the Moorish king; because of the capture of Boabdil. Twenty-two banners fell into the hands of the Christians, and were carried to Vaena, and hung up in the church; where (says a historian of after-times) they remain to this day. Once a year, on the day of St. George, they are borne about in procession, by the inhabitants, who at the same

* Cura de los Palacios.

time give thanks to God for this signal victory granted to their forefathers.

Great was the triumph of the count de Cabra, when, on returning from the pursuit of the enemy, he found that the Moorish king had fallen into his hands. When the unfortunate Boabdil was brought before him, however, and he beheld him a dejected captive, whom but shortly before he had seen in royal splendor, surrounded by his army, the generous heart of the count was touched by sympathy. He said every thing that became a courteous and Christian knight, to comfort him; observing that the same mutability of things which had suddenly destroyed his recent prosperity, might cause his present misfortunes as rapidly to pass away; since in this world nothing is stable, and even sorrow has its allotted term.

CHAPTER XVII

LAMENTATIONS OF THE MOORS FOR THE BATTLE OF LUCENA.

THE sentinels looked out from the watch-towers of Loxa, along the valley of the Xenel, which passes through the mountains of Algaringo. They looked to behold the king returning in triumph, at the head of his shining host, laden with the spoil of the unbeliever. They looked to behold the standard of their warlike idol, the fierce Ali Atar, borne by the chivalry of Loxa, ever foremost in the wars of the border.

In the evening of the 21st of April, they descried a single horseman urging his faltering steed along the banks of the Xenel. As he drew near, they perceived, by the flash of arms, that he was a warrior, and on nearer approach, by the richness of his armor and the caparison of his steed, they knew him to be a warrior of rank.

He reached Loxa, faint and aghast; his Arabian courser covered with foam, and dust, and blood, panting and staggering with fatigue, and gashed with wounds. Having brought his master in safety, he sunk down and died before the gate of the city. The soldiers at the gate gathered round the cavalier, as he stood mute and melancholy by his expiring steed; they knew him to be the gallant Cidi Caleb, nephew of the chief alfaqui of the Albaycin of Granada. When the people of Loxa

beheld this noble cavalier, thus alone, haggard and dejected, their hearts were filled with fearful forebodings.

"Cavalier," said they, "how fares it with the king and army?"

He cast his hand mournfully towards the land of the Christians. "There they lie!" exclaimed he. "The heavens have fallen upon them. All are lost! all dead!"*

Upon this, there was a great cry of consternation among the people, and loud wailings of women: for the flower of the youth of Loxa were with the army.

An old Moorish soldier, scarred in many a border battle, stood leaning on his lance by the gateway. "Where is Ali Atar?" demanded he eagerly. "If he lives, the army cannot be lost."

"I saw his turban cleaved by the Christian sword," replied Cidi Caleb. "His body is floating in the Xenel."

When the soldier heard these words, he smote his breast and threw dust upon his head; for he was an old follower of Ali Atar.

The noble Cidi Caleb gave himself no repose, but mounting another steed, hastened to carry the disastrous tidings to Granada. As he passed through the villages and hamlets, he spread sorrow around; for their chosen men had followed the king to the wars.

When he entered the gates of Granada, and announced the loss of the king and army, a voice of horror went throughout the city. Every one thought but of his own share in the general calamity, and crowded round the bearer of ill tidings. One asked after a father, another after a brother, some after a lover, and many a mother after her son. His replies were still of wounds and death. To one he replied, "I saw thy father pierced with a lance, as he defended the person of the king." To another, "Thy brother fell wounded under the hoofs of the horses; but there was no time to aid him, for the Christian cavalry were upon us." To another, "I saw the horse of thy lover, covered with blood and galloping without his rider." To another, "Thy son fought by my side, on the banks of the Xenel: we were surrounded by the enemy, and driven into the stream. I heard him cry upon Allah, in the midst of the waters: when I reached the other bank, he was no longer by my side."

* Cura de los Palacios.

The noble Cidi Caleb passed on, leaving all Granada in lamentation; he urged his steed up the steep avenue of trees and fountains that leads to the Alhambra, nor stopped until he arrived before the gate of Justice. Ayxa, the mother of Boabdil, and Morayma, his beloved and tender wife, had daily watched from the tower of Gomeres, to behold his triumphant return. Who shall describe their affliction, when they heard the tidings of Cidi Caleb? The sultana Ayxa spake not much, but sate as one entranced in wo. Every now and then, a deep sigh burst forth, but she raised her eyes to heaven: "It is the will of Allah!" said she, and with these words endeavored to repress the agonies of a mother's sorrow. The tender Morayma threw herself on the earth, and gave way to the full turbulence of her feelings, bewailing her husband and her father. The high-minded Ayxa rebuked the violence of her grief: "Moderate these transports, my daughter," said she; "remember magnanimity should be the attribute of princes; it becomes not them to give way to clamorous sorrow, like common and vulgar minds." But Morayma could only deplore her loss, with the anguish of a tender woman. She shut herself up in her mirador, and gazed all day, with streaming eyes, upon the vega. Every object before her recalled the causes of her affliction. The river Xenel, which ran shining amidst the groves and gardens, was the same on whose banks had perished her father, Ali Atar; before her lay the road to Loxa, by which Boabdil had departed, in martial state, surrounded by the chivalry of Granada. Ever and anon she would burst into an agony of grief. "Alas! my father!" she would exclaim; "the river runs smiling before me, that covers thy mangled remains; who will gather them to an honored tomb, in the land of the unbeliever? And thou, O Boabdil, light of my eyes! joy of my heart! life of my life! wo the day, and wo the hour, that I saw thee depart from these walls. The road by which thou hast departed is solitary; never will it be gladdened by thy return! the mountain thou hast traversed lies like a cloud in the distance, and all beyond it is darkness."

The royal minstrels were summoned to assuage the sorrows of the queen: they attuned their instruments to cheerful strains; but in a little while the anguish of their hearts prevailed, and turned their songs to lamentations.

"Beautiful Granada!" they exclaimed, "how is thy glory faded! The Vivarrambla no longer echoes to the tramp of

steed and sound of trumpet; no longer is it crowded with thy youthful nobles, eager to display their prowess in the tourney and the festive tilt of reeds. Alas! the flower of thy chivalry lies low in a foreign land! the soft note of the lute is no longer heard in thy moonlit streets; the lively castanet is silent upon thy hills; and the graceful dance of the Zambra is no more seen beneath thy bowers. Behold, the Alhambra is forlorn and desolate! in vain do the orange and myrtle breathe their perfumes into its silken chambers; in vain does the nightingale sing within its groves; in vain are its marble halls refreshed by the sound of fountains and the gush of limpid rills. Alas! the countenance of the king no longer shines within those halls; the light of the Alhambra is set for ever!"

Thus all Granada, say the Arabian chroniclers, gave itself up to lamentation: there was nothing but the voice of wailing, from the palace to the cottage. All joined to deplore their youthful monarch, cut down in the freshness and promise of his youth; many feared that the prediction of the astrologers was about to be fulfilled, and that the downfall of the kingdom would follow the death of Boabdil; while all declared, that had he survived, he was the very sovereign calculated to restore the realm to its ancient prosperity and glory.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW MULEY ABEN HASSAN PROFITED BY THE MISFORTUNES OF HIS SON BOABDIL.

AN unfortunate death atones, with the world, for a multitude of errors. While the populace thought their youthful monarch had perished in the field, nothing could exceed their grief for his loss, and their adoration of his memory; when, however, they learnt that he was still alive, and had surrendered himself captive to the Christians, their feelings underwent an instant change. They decried his talents as a commander, his courage as a soldier; they railed at his expedition, as rash and ill conducted; and they reviled him for not having dared to die on the field of battle, rather than surrender to the enemy.

The alfaquis, as usual, mingled with the populace and artfully guided their discontents. "Behold," exclaimed they,

“the prediction is accomplished, which was pronounced at the birth of Boabdil. He has been seated on the throne, and the kingdom has suffered downfall and disgrace by his defeat and captivity. Comfort yourselves, O Moslems! The evil day has passed by; the fates are satisfied; the sceptre which has been broken in the feeble hand of Boabdil, is destined to resume its former power and sway in the vigorous grasp of Aben Hassan.”

The people were struck with the wisdom of these words: they rejoiced that the baleful prediction, which had so long hung over them, was at an end; and declared, that none but Muley Aben Hassan had the valor and capacity necessary for the protection of the kingdom, in this time of trouble.

The longer the captivity of Boabdil continued, the greater grew the popularity of his father. One city after another renewed allegiance to him; for power attracts power, and fortune creates fortune. At length he was enabled to return to Granada, and establish himself once more in the Alhambra. At his approach, his repudiated spouse, the sultana Ayxa, gathered together the family and treasures of her captive son, and retired, with a handful of the nobles, into the Albaycin, the rival quarter of the city, the inhabitants of which still retained feelings of loyalty to Boabdil. Here she fortified herself, and held the semblance of a court in the name of her son. The fierce Muley Aben Hassan would have willingly carried fire and sword into this factious quarter of the capital; but he dared not confide in his new and uncertain popularity. Many of the nobles detested him for his past cruelty; and a large portion of the soldiery, beside many of the people of his own party, respected the virtues of Ayxa la Horra, and pitied the misfortunes of Boabdil.

Granada therefore presented the singular spectacle of two sovereignties within the same city. The old king fortified himself in the lofty towers of the Alhambra, as much against his own subjects as against the Christians; while Ayxa, with the zeal of a mother's affection, which waxes warmer and warmer towards her offspring when in adversity, still maintained the standard of Boabdil on the rival fortress of the Alcazaba, and kept his powerful faction alive within the walls of the Albaycin.

CHAPTER XIX.

CAPTIVITY OF BOABDIL EL CHICO.

THE unfortunate Boabdil remained a prisoner, closely guarded, in the castle of Vaena. From the towers of his prison, he beheld the town below filled with armed men; and the lofty hill on which it was built, girdled by massive walls and ramparts, on which a vigilant watch was maintained night and day. The mountains around were studded with watch-towers, overlooking the lonely roads which led to Granada, so that a turban could not stir over the border without the alarm being given, and the whole country put on the alert. Boabdil saw that there was no hope of escape from such a fortress, and that any attempt to rescue him would be equally in vain. His heart was filled with anxiety, as he thought on the confusion and ruin which his captivity must cause in his affairs; while sorrows of a softer kind overcame his fortitude, as he thought on the evils it might bring upon his family.

The count de Cabra, though he maintained the most vigilant guard over his royal prisoner, yet treated him with profound deference; he had appointed the noblest apartments in the castle for his abode, and sought in every way to cheer him during his captivity. A few days only had passed away, when missives arrived from the Castilian sovereigns. Ferdinand had been transported with joy at hearing of the capture of the Moorish monarch, seeing the deep and politic uses that might be made of such an event; but the magnanimous spirit of Isabella was filled with compassion for the unfortunate captive. Their messages to Boabdil were full of sympathy and consolation, breathing that high and gentle courtesy which dwells in noble minds.

This magnanimity in his foe cheered the dejected spirit of the captive monarch. "Tell my sovereigns, the king and queen," said he to the messenger, "that I cannot be unhappy, being in the power of such high and mighty princes, especially since they partake so largely of that grace and goodness which Allah bestows upon the monarchs whom he greatly loves. Tell them further, that I had long thought of submitting myself to their sway, to receive the kingdom of Granada

from their hands, in the same manner that my ancestor received it from King John II., father to the gracious queen. My greatest sorrow in this my captivity, is, that I must appear to do that from force, which I would fain have done from inclination."

In the mean time, Muley Aben Hassan, finding the faction of his son still formidable in Granada, was anxious to consolidate his power, by gaining possession of the person of Boabdil. For this purpose, he sent an embassy to the Catholic monarchs, offering large terms for the ransom, or rather the purchase, of his son; proposing, among other conditions, to release the count of Cifuentes and nine other of his most distinguished captives, and to enter into a treaty of confederacy with the sovereigns. Neither did the implacable father make any scruple of testifying his indifference whether his son were delivered up alive or dead, so that his person were placed assuredly within his power.

The humane heart of Isabella revolted at the idea of giving up the unfortunate prince into the hands of his most unnatural and inveterate enemy: a disdainful refusal was therefore returned to the old monarch, whose message had been couched in a vaunting spirit. He was informed that the Castilian sovereigns would listen to no proposals of peace from Muley Aben Hassan, until he should lay down his arms, and offer them in all humility.

Overtures in a different spirit were made by the mother of Boabdil, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, with the concurrence of the party which still remained faithful to him. It was thereby proposed, that Mahomet Abdalla, otherwise called Boabdil, should hold his crown as vassal to the Castilian sovereigns, paying an annual tribute, and releasing seventy Christian captives annually, for five years: that he should, moreover, pay a large sum, upon the spot, for his ransom, and at the same time give freedom to four hundred Christians to be chosen by the king: that he should also engage to be always ready to render military aid, and should come to the Cortes, or assemblage of nobles and distinguished vassals of the crown, whenever summoned. His only son, and the sons of twelve distinguished Moorish houses, were to be delivered as hostages.

King Ferdinand was at Cordova when he received this proposition. Queen Isabella was absent at the time. He was anxious to consult her in so momentous an affair; or rather, he was fearful of proceeding too precipitately, and not draw-

ing from this fortunate event all the advantage of which it was susceptible. Without returning any reply, therefore, to the mission, he sent missives to the castle of Vaena, where Boabdil remained in courteous durance of the brave count de Cabra, ordering that the captive monarch should be brought to Cordova.

The count de Cabra set out, with his illustrious prisoner; but when he arrived at Cordova, king Ferdinand declined seeing the Moorish monarch. He was still undetermined what course to pursue,—whether to retain him prisoner, set him at liberty on ransom, or treat him with politic magnanimity; and each course would require a different kind of reception. Until this point should be resolved, therefore, he gave him in charge to Martin de Alarcon, alcaide of the ancient fortress of Porcuna, with orders to guard him strictly, but to treat him with the distinction and deference due unto a prince. These commands were strictly obeyed; and, with the exception of being restrained in his liberty, the monarch was as nobly entertained as he could have been in his regal palace at Granada.

In the mean time, Ferdinand availed himself of this critical moment, while Granada was distracted with factions and dissensions, and before he had concluded any treaty with Boabdil, to make a puissant and ostentatious inroad into the very heart of the kingdom, at the head of his most illustrious nobles. He sacked and destroyed several towns and castles, and extended his ravages to the very gates of Granada. Old Muley Aben Hassan did not venture to oppose him. His city was filled with troops, but he was uncertain of their affection. He dreaded, that should he sally forth, the gates of Granada might be closed against him by the faction of the Albaycin.

The old Moor stood on the lofty tower of the Alhambra, (says Antonio Agapida,) grinding his teeth, and foaming like a tiger shut up in his cage, as he beheld the glittering battalions of the Christians wheeling about the vega, and the standard of the cross shining forth from among the smoke of infidel villages and hamlets. The most Catholic king (continues Agapida) would gladly have continued this righteous ravage, but his munitions began to fail. Satisfied, therefore, with having laid waste the country of the enemy, and insulted old Muley Aben Hassan in his very capital, he returned to Cordova covered with laurels, and his army laden with spoils; and now bethought himself of coming to an immediate decision, in regard to his royal prisoner.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE TREATMENT OF BOABDIL BY THE CASTILIAN SOVEREIGNS.

A STATELY convention was held by king Ferdinand in the ancient city of Cordova, composed of several of the most reverend prelates and renowned cavaliers of the kingdom, to determine upon the fate of the unfortunate Boabdil.

Don Alonzo de Cardenas, the worthy Master of Santiago, was one of the first who gave his counsel. He was a pious and zealous knight, rigid in his devotion to the faith; and his holy zeal had been inflamed to peculiar vehemence, since his disastrous crusade among the mountains of Malaga. He inveighed with ardor against any compromise or compact with the infidels: the object of this war, he observed, was not the subjection of the Moors, but their utter expulsion from the land; so that there might no longer remain a single stain of Mahometanism throughout Christian Spain. He gave it as his opinion, therefore, that the captive king ought not to be set at liberty.

Roderigo Ponce de Leon, the valiant marques of Cadiz, on the contrary, spoke warmly for the release of Boabdil. He pronounced it a measure of sound policy, even if done without conditions. It would tend to keep up the civil war in Granada, which was as a fire consuming the entrails of the enemy, and effecting more for the interests of Spain, without expense, than all the conquests of its arms.

The grand cardinal of Spain, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, coincided in opinion with the marques of Cadiz. Nay, (added that pious prelate and politic statesman,) it would be sound wisdom to furnish the Moor with men and money, and all other necessaries, to promote the civil war in Granada: by this means would be produced great benefit to the service of God, since we are assured by his infallible word, that "a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." *

Ferdinand weighed these counsels in his mind, but was slow in coming to a decision; he was religiously attentive to his own interests, (observes Fray Antonio Agapida,) knowing himself to be but an instrument of Providence in this holy war, and that, therefore, in consulting his own advantage he was

* Salazar. *Cronica del Gran Cardinal*, p. 188.

promoting the interests of the faith. The opinion of queen Isabella relieved him from his perplexity. That high-minded princess was zealous for the promotion of the faith, but not for the extermination of the infidels. The Moorish kings had held their thrones as vassals to her progenitors; she was content at present to accord the same privilege, and that the royal prisoner should be liberated on condition of becoming a vassal to the crown. By this means might be effected the deliverance of many Christian captives, who were languishing in Moorish chains.

King Ferdinand adopted the magnanimous measure recommended by the queen; but he accompanied it with several shrewd conditions; exacting tribute, military services, and safe passage and maintenance for Christian troops, throughout the places which should adhere to Boabdil. The captive king readily submitted to these stipulations, and swore, after the manner of his faith, to observe them with exactitude. A truce was arranged for two years, during which the Castilian sovereigns engaged to maintain him on his throne, and to assist him in recovering all places which he had lost during his captivity.

When Boabdil el Chico had solemnly agreed to this arrangement, in the castle of Porcuna, preparations were made to receive him in Cordova in regal style. Superb steeds richly caparisoned, and raiment of brocade, and silk, and the most costly cloths, with all other articles of sumptuous array, were furnished to him and fifty Moorish cavaliers, who had come to treat for his ransom, that he might appear in state befitting the monarch of Granada, and the most distinguished vassal of the Castilian sovereigns. Money also was advanced to maintain him in suitable grandeur, during his residence at the Castilian court, and his return to his dominions. Finally, it was ordered by the sovereigns, that when he came to Cordova, all the nobles and dignitaries of the court should go forth to receive him.

A question now arose among certain of those ancient and experienced men, who grow gray about a court in the profound study of forms and ceremonials, with whom a point of punctilio is as a vast political right, and who contract a sublime and awful idea of the external dignity of the throne. Certain of these court sages propounded the momentous question, whether the Moorish monarch, coming to do homage as a vassal, ought not to kneel and kiss the hand of the king. This was immediately decided in the affirmative, by a large number of ancient

cavaliers accustomed (says Antonio Agapida) to the lofty punctilio of our most dignified court and transcendent sovereigns. The king, therefore, was informed by those who arranged the ceremonies, that when the Moorish monarch appeared in his presence, he was expected to extend his royal hand to receive the kiss of homage.

"I should certainly do so," replied king Ferdinand, "were he at liberty, and in his own kingdom; but I certainly shall not do so, seeing that he is a prisoner and in mine."

The courtiers loudly applauded the magnanimity of this reply; though many condemned it in secret, as savoring of too much generosity towards an infidel; and the worthy Jesuit, Fray Antonio Agapida, fully concurs in their opinion.

The Moorish king entered Cordova with his little train of faithful knights, and escorted by all the nobility and chivalry of the Castilian court. He was conducted, with great state and ceremony, to the royal palace. When he came in presence of Ferdinand, he knelt and offered to kiss his hand, not merely in homage as his subject, but in gratitude for his liberty. Ferdinand declined the token of vassalage, and raised him graciously from the earth. An interpreter began, in the name of Boabdil, to laud the magnanimity of the Castilian monarch, and to promise the most implicit submission. "Enough," said king Ferdinand, interrupting the interpreter in the midst of his harangue; "there is no need of these compliments. I trust in his integrity, that he will do every thing becoming a good man and a good king." With these words, he received Boabdil el Chico into his royal friendship and protection.

CHAPTER XXI.

RETURN OF BOABDIL FROM CAPTIVITY.

IN the month of August, a noble Moor, of the race of the Abencerrages, arrived with a splendid retinue at the city of Cordova, bringing with him the son of Boabdil el Chico, and other of the noble youth of Granada, as hostages for the fulfilment of the terms of ransom. When the Moorish king beheld his son, his only child, who was to remain in his stead, a sort of captive in a hostile land, he folded him in his arms and

wept over him. "Wo the day that I was born!" exclaimed he, "and evil the stars that presided at my birth! Well was I called El Zegoybi, or the unlucky; for sorrow is heaped upon me by my father, and sorrow do I transmit to my son!" The afflicted heart of Boabdil, however, was soothed by the kindness of the Christian sovereigns, who received the hostage prince with a tenderness suited to his age, and a distinction worthy of his rank. They delivered him in charge to the worthy alcaide Martin de Alarcon, who had treated his father with such courtesy during his confinement in the castle of Porcuna, giving orders, that, after the departure of the latter, his son should be entertained with great honor and princely attention, in the same fortress.

On the 2d of September, a guard of honor assembled at the gate of the mansion of Boabdil, to escort him to the frontiers of his kingdom. He pressed his child to his heart at parting, but he uttered not a word; for there were many Christian eyes to behold his emotion. He mounted his steed, and never turned his head to look again upon the youth; but those who were near him observed the vehement struggle that shook his frame, wherein the anguish of the father had well nigh subdued the studied equanimity of the king.

Boabdil el Chico and king Ferdinand sallied forth, side by side, from Cordova, amidst the acclamations of a prodigious multitude. When they were a short distance from the city, they separated, with many gracious expressions on the part of the Castilian monarch, and many thankful acknowledgments from his late captive, whose heart had been humbled by adversity. Ferdinand departed for Guadalupe, and Boabdil for Granada. The latter was accompanied by a guard of honor; and the viceroys of Andalusia, and the generals on the frontier, were ordered to furnish him with escorts, and to show him all possible honor on his journey. In this way he was conducted in royal state through the country he had entered to ravage, and was placed in safety in his own dominions.

He was met on the frontier by the principal nobles and cavaliers of his court, who had been secretly sent by his mother, the sultana Ayxa, to escort him to the capital. The heart of Boabdil was lifted up for a moment, when he found himself on his own territories, surrounded by Moslem knights, with his own standards waving over his head; and he began to doubt the predictions of the astrologers: he soon found cause, however, to moderate his exultation. The loyal train which had

come to welcome him, was but scanty in number, and he missed many of his most zealous and obsequious courtiers. He had returned, indeed, to his kingdom, but it was no longer the devoted kingdom he had left. The story of his vassalage to the Christian sovereigns had been made use of by his father to ruin him with the people. He had been represented as a traitor to his country, a renegado to his faith, and as leagued with the enemies of both, to subdue the Moslems of Spain to the yoke of Christian bondage. In this way, the mind of the public had been turned from him; the greater part of the nobility had thronged round the throne of his father in the Alhambra; and his mother, the resolute sultana Ayxa, with difficulty maintained her faction in the opposite towers of the Alcazaba.

Such was the melancholy picture of affairs given to Boabdil by the courtiers who had come forth to meet him. They even informed him that it would be an enterprise of difficulty and danger to make his way back to the capital, and regain the little court which still remained faithful to him in the heart of the city. The old tiger, Muley Aben Hassan, lay couched within the Alhambra, and the walls and gates of the city were strongly guarded by his troops. Boabdil shook his head at these tidings. He called to mind the evil omen of his breaking his lance against the gate of Elvira, when issuing forth so vain-gloriously with his army, which he now saw clearly had foreboded the destruction of that army on which he had so confidently relied. "Henceforth," said he, "let no man have the impiety to scoff at omens."

Boabdil approached his capital by stealth, and in the night, prowling about its walls, like an enemy seeking to destroy, rather than a monarch returning to his throne. At length he seized upon a postern-gate of the Albaycin,—that part of the city which had always been in his favor; he passed rapidly through the streets before the populace were aroused from their sleep, and reached in safety the fortress of the Alcazaba. Here he was received into the embraces of his intrepid mother, and his favorite wife Morayma. The transports of the latter, on the safe return of her husband, were mingled with tears; for she thought of her father, Ali Atar, who had fallen in his cause, and of her only son, who was left a hostage in the hands of the Christians.

The heart of Boabdil, softened by his misfortunes, was moved by the changes in every thing round him; but his mother

called up his spirit. "This," said she, "is no time for tears and fondness. A king must think of his sceptre and his throne, and not yield to softness like common men. Thou hast done well, my son, in throwing thyself resolutely into Granada: it must depend upon thyself, whether thou remain here a king or a captive."

The old king Muley Aben Hassan had retired to his couch that night, in one of the strongest towers of the Alhambra; but his restless anxiety kept him from repose. In the first watch of the night, he heard a shout faintly rising from the quarter of the Albaycin, which is on the opposite side of the deep valley of the Darro. Shortly afterwards, horsemen came galloping up the hill that leads to the main gate of the Alhambra, spreading the alarm that Boabdil had entered the city and possessed himself of the Alcazaba.

In the first transports of his rage, the old king would have struck the messenger to earth. He hastily summoned his counsellors and commanders, exhorting them to stand by him in this critical moment; and, during the night, made every preparation to enter the Albaycin sword in hand in the morning.

In the mean time, the sultana Ayxa had taken prompt and vigorous measures to strengthen her party. The Albaycin was the part of the city filled by the lower orders. The return of Boabdil was proclaimed throughout the streets, and large sums of money were distributed among the populace. The nobles, assembled in the Alcazaba, were promised honors and rewards by Boabdil, as soon as he should be firmly seated on the throne. These well-timed measures had the customary effect; and, by daybreak, all the motley populace of the Albaycin were in arms.

A doleful day succeeded. All Granada was a scene of tumult and horror. Drums and trumpets resounded in every part; all business was interrupted; the shops were shut, the doors barricadoed. Armed bands paraded the streets, some shouting for Boabdil, and some for Muley Aben Hassan. When they encountered each other, they fought furiously and without mercy; every public square became a scene of battle. The great mass of the lower orders was in favor of Boabdil, but it was a multitude without discipline or lofty spirit; part of the people was regularly armed, but the greater number had sallied forth with the implements of their trade. The troops of the old king, among whom were many cavaliers of

pride and valor, soon drove the populace from the squares. They fortified themselves, however, in the streets and lanes, which they barricadoed. They made fortresses of their houses, and fought desperately from the windows and the roofs, and many a warrior of the highest blood of Granada was laid low by plebeian hands and plebeian weapons, in this civic brawl.

It was impossible that such violent convulsions should last long, in the heart of a city. The people soon longed for repose, and a return to their peaceful occupations; and the cavaliers detested these conflicts with the multitude, in which there were all the horrors of war without its laurels. By the interference of the alfaquis, an armistice was at length effected. Boabdil was persuaded that there was no dependence upon the inconstant favor of the multitude, and was prevailed upon to quit a capital where he could only maintain a precarious seat upon his throne by a perpetual and bloody struggle. He fixed his court at the city of Almeria, which was entirely devoted to him, and which, at that time, vied with Granada in splendor and importance. This compromise of grandeur for tranquillity, however, was sorely against the counsels of his proud-spirited mother, the sultana Ayxa. Granada appeared, in her eyes, the only legitimate seat of dominion; and she observed, with a smile of disdain, that he was not worthy of being called a monarch, who was not master of his capital.

CHAPTER XXII.

FORAY OF THE MOORISH ALCAYDES, AND BATTLE OF LOPERA.

THOUGH Muley Aben Hassan had regained undivided sway over the city of Granada, and the alfaquis, by his command, had denounced his son Boabdil as an apostate, and as one doomed by Heaven to misfortune, still the latter had many adherents among the common people. Whenever, therefore, any act of the old monarch was displeasing to the turbulent multitude, they were prone to give him a hint of the slippery nature of his standing, by shouting out the name of Boabdil el Chico. Long experience had instructed Muley Aben Hassan in the character of the inconstant people over whom he ruled. "Allah Achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great; but a success-

ful inroad into the country of the unbelievers will make more converts to my cause than a thousand texts of the Koran, expounded by ten thousand alfaquis."

At this time king Ferdinand was absent from Andalusia on a distant expedition, with many of his troops. The moment was favorable for a foray, and Muley Aben Hassan cast about his thoughts for a leader to conduct it. Ali Atar, the terror of the border, the scourge of Andalusia, was dead; but there was another veteran general, scarce inferior to him for predatory warfare. This was old Bexir, the gray and crafty alcaide of Malaga; and the people under his command were ripe for an expedition of the kind. The signal defeat and slaughter of the Spanish knights in the neighboring mountains had filled the people of Malaga with vanity and self-conceit. They had attributed to their own valor the defeat which had been caused by the nature of the country. Many of them wore the armor and paraded in public with the horses of the unfortunate cavaliers slain on that occasion, which they vauntingly displayed as the trophies of their boasted victory. They had talked themselves into a contempt for the chivalry of Andalusia, and were impatient for an opportunity to overrun a country defended by such troops. This, Muley Aben Hassan considered a favorable state of mind to insure a daring inroad, and he sent orders to old Bexir to gather together his people and the choicest warriors of the borders, and to carry fire and sword into the very heart of Andalusia. The wary old Bexir immediately dispatched his emissaries among the alcaides of the border towns, calling upon them to assemble with their troops at the city of Ronda, close upon the Christian frontier.

Ronda was the most virulent nest of Moorish depredators in the whole border country. It was situated in the midst of the wild Serrania, or chain of mountains of the same name, which are uncommonly lofty, broken, and precipitous. It stood on an almost isolated rock, nearly encircled by a deep valley, or rather chasm, through which ran the beautiful river called Rio Verde. The Moors of this city were the most active, robust, and warlike of all the mountaineers, and their very children discharged the cross-bow with unerring aim. They were incessantly harassing the rich plains of Andalusia; their city abounded with Christian spoils, and their deep dungeons were crowded with Christian captives, who might sigh in vain for deliverance from this impregnable fortress. Such was Ronda in the time of the Moors; and it has ever retained

something of the same character, even to the present day. Its inhabitants continue to be among the boldest, fiercest, and most adventurous of the Andalusian mountaineers; and the Serrania de Ronda is famous as the most dangerous resort of the bandit and the contrabandista.

Hamet Zeli, surnamed El Zegri, was the commander of this belligerent city and its fierce inhabitants. He was of the tribe of the Zegries, and one of the most proud and daring of that warlike race. Beside the inhabitants of Ronda, he had a legion of African Moors in his immediate service. They were of the tribe of the Gomeres, mercenary troops, whose hot African blood had not yet been tempered by the softer living of Spain, and whose whole business was to fight. These he kept always well armed and well appointed. The rich pasturage of the valley of Ronda produced a breed of horses famous for strength and speed; no cavalry, therefore, was better mounted than the band of Gomeres. Rapid on the march, fierce in the attack, it would sweep down upon the Andalusian plains like a sudden blast from the mountains, and pass away as suddenly, before there was time for pursuit.

There was nothing that stirred up the spirit of the Moors of the frontiers more thoroughly than the idea of a foray. The summons of Bexir was gladly obeyed by the alcaides of the border towns, and in a little while there was a force of fifteen hundred horse and four thousand foot, the very pith and marrow of the surrounding country, assembled within the walls of Ronda. The people of the place anticipated with eagerness the rich spoils of Andalusia that were soon to crowd their gates; throughout the day, the city resounded with the noise of kettle-drum and trumpet; the high-mettled steeds stamped and neighed in their stalls, as if they shared the impatience for the foray; while the Christian captives sighed, as the varied din of preparation reached to their rocky dungeons, denoting that a fresh ravage was preparing against their countrymen.

The infidel host sallied forth full of spirits, anticipating an easy ravage and abundant booty. They encouraged each other in a contempt for the prowess of the foe. Many of the warriors of Malaga, and of some of the mountain towns, had insultingly arrayed themselves in the splendid armor of the Christian knights slain or taken prisoners in the famous massacre, and some of them rode the Andalusian steeds which had been captured on that occasion.

The wary Bexir had concerted his plans so secretly and expeditiously, that the Christian towns of Andalusia had not the least suspicion of the storm that had gathered beyond the mountains. The vast and rocky range of the Serrania de Ronda extended like a screen, covering all their movements from observation.

The army made its way as rapidly as the rugged nature of the mountains would permit, guided by Hamet el Zegri, the bold alcaide of Ronda, who knew every pass and defile: not a drum, nor the clash of a cymbal, nor the blast of a trumpet, was permitted to be heard. The mass of war rolled quietly on as the gathering cloud to the brow of the mountains, intending to burst down like the thunderbolt upon the plain.

Never let the most wary commander fancy himself secure from discovery; for rocks have eyes, and trees have ears, and the birds of the air have tongues, to betray the most secret enterprise. There chanced at this time to be six Christian scouts, prowling about the savage heights of the Serrania de Ronda. They were of that kind of lawless ruffians who infest the borders of belligerent countries, ready at any time to fight for pay, or prowl for plunder. The wild mountain passes of Spain have ever abounded with loose rambling vagabonds of the kind,—soldiers in war, robbers in peace; guides, guards, smugglers, or cut-throats, according to the circumstances of the case.

These six marauders (says Fray Antonio Agapida) were on this occasion chosen instruments, sanctified by the righteousness of their cause. They were lurking among the mountains, to entrap Moorish cattle or Moorish prisoners, both of which were equally saleable in the Christian market. They had ascended one of the loftiest cliffs, and were looking out like birds of prey, ready to pounce upon any thing that might offer in the valley, when they descried the Moorish army emerging from a mountain glen. They watched it in silence as it wound below them, remarking the standards of the various towns and the pennons of the commanders. They hovered about it on its march, skulking from cliff to cliff, until they saw the route by which it intended to enter the Christian country. They then dispersed, each making his way by the secret passes of the mountains to some different alcaide, that they might spread the alarm far and wide, and each get a separate reward.

One hastened to Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, the same

valiant alcaide who had repulsed Muley Aben Hassan from the walls of Alhama, and who now commanded at Ecija, in the absence of the Master of Santiago. Others roused the town of Utrera, and the places of that neighborhood, putting them all on the alert.

Puerto Carrero was a cavalier of consummate vigor and activity. He immediately sent couriers to the alcaides of the neighboring fortresses; to Herman Carrello, captain of a body of the Holy Brotherhood, and of certain knights of the order of Alcantara. Puerto Carrero was the first to take the field. Knowing the hard and hungry service of these border scampers, he made every man take a hearty repast, and see that his horse was well shod and perfectly appointed. Then all being refreshed and in valiant heart, he sallied forth to seek the Moors. He had but a handful of men, the retainers of his household and troops of his captaincy; but they were well armed and mounted, and accustomed to the sudden rouses of the border; men whom the cry of "Arm and out! to horse and to the field!" was sufficient at any time to put in a fever of animation.

While the northern part of Andalusia was thus on the alert, one of the scouts had hastened southward to the city of Xeres, and given the alarm to the valiant marques of Cadiz. When the marques heard that the Moor was over the border, and that the standard of Malaga was in the advance, his heart bounded with a momentary joy; for he remembered the massacre in the mountains, where his valiant brothers had been mangled before his eyes. The very authors of his calamity were now at hand, and he flattered himself that the day of vengeance had arrived. He made a hasty levy of his retainers and of the fighting men of Xeres, and hurried off with three hundred horse and two hundred foot, all resolute men and panting for revenge.

In the mean time, the veteran Bexir had accomplished his march, as he imagined, undiscovered. From the openings of the craggy defiles, he pointed out the fertile plains of Andalusia, and regaled the eyes of his soldiery with the rich country they were about to ravage. The fierce Gomeres of Ronda were flushed with joy at the sight; and even their steeds seemed to prick up their ears and snuff the breeze, as they beheld the scenes of their frequent forays.

When they came to where the mountain defile opened into the low land, Bexir divided his force into three parts: one,

composed of foot-soldiers and of such as were weakly mounted, he left to guard the pass, being too experienced a veteran not to know the importance of securing a retreat: a second body he placed in ambush, among the groves and thickets on the banks of the river Lopera: the third, consisting of light cavalry, he sent forth to ravage the Campiña, or great plain of Utrera. Most of this latter force was composed of the fiery Gomerres of Ronda, mounted on the fleet steeds bred among the mountains. It was led by the bold alcayde Hamet el Zegri, who was ever eager to be foremost in the forage. Little suspecting that the country on both sides was on the alarm, and rushing from all directions to close upon them in rear, this fiery troop dashed forward until they came within two leagues of Utrera. Here they scattered themselves about the plain, careering round the great herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, and sweeping them into droves, to be hurried to the mountains.

While they were thus dispersed in every direction, a troop of horse and body of foot from Utrera came suddenly upon them. The Moors rallied together in small parties, and endeavored to defend themselves; but they were without a leader, for Hamet el Zegri was at a distance, having, like a hawk, made a wide circuit in pursuit of prey. The marauders soon gave way and fled towards the ambush on the banks of the Lopera, being hotly pursued by the men of Utrera.

When they reached the Lopera, the Moors in ambush rushed forth with furious cries; and the fugitives, recovering courage from this reinforcement, rallied and turned upon their pursuers. The Christians stood their ground, though greatly inferior in number. Their lances were soon broken, and they came to sharp work with sword and scimitar. The Christians fought valiantly, but were in danger of being overwhelmed. The bold Hamet had collected a handful of his scattered Gomerres, and, leaving his prey, had galloped towards the scene of action. His little troop of horsemen had reached the crest of a rising ground at no great distance, when trumpets were heard in another direction, and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero and his followers came galloping into the field, and charged upon the infidels in flank.

The Moors were astounded at finding war thus breaking upon them, from various quarters of what they had expected to find an unguarded country. They fought for a short time with desperation, and resisted a vehement assault from the knights

of Alcantara, and the men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood. At length the veteran Bexir was struck from his horse by Puerto Carrero, and taken prisoner, and the whole force gave way and fled. In their flight, they separated, and took two roads to the mountains, thinking, by dividing their forces, to distract the enemy. The Christians were too few to separate. Puerto Carrero kept them together, pursuing one division of the enemy with great slaughter. This battle took place at the fountain of the fig-tree, near to the Lopera. Six hundred Moorish cavaliers were slain, and many taken prisoners. Much spoil was collected on the field, with which the Christians returned in triumph to their homes.

The larger body of the enemy had retreated along a road leading more to the south, by the banks of the Guadalete. When they reached that river, the sound of pursuit had died away, and they rallied to breathe and refresh themselves on the margin of the stream. Their force was reduced to about a thousand horse, and a confused multitude of foot. While they were scattered and partly dismounted on the banks of the Guadalete, a fresh storm of war burst upon them from an opposite direction. It was the marques of Cadiz, leading on his household troops and the fighting men of Xeres. When the Christian warriors came in sight of the Moors, they were roused to fury at beholding many of them arrayed in the armor of the cavaliers who had been slain among the mountains of Malaga. Nay, some who had been in that defeat beheld their own armor, which they had cast away in their flight, to enable themselves to climb the mountains. Exasperated at the sight, they rushed upon the foe with the ferocity of tigers, rather than the temperate courage of cavaliers. Each man felt as if he were avenging the death of a relative, or wiping out his own disgrace. The good marques, himself, beheld a powerful Moor bestriding the horse of his brother Beltram: giving a cry of rage and anguish at the sight, he rushed through the thickest of the enemy, attacked the Moor with resistless fury, and after a short combat, hurled him breathless to the earth.

The Moors, already vanquished in spirit, could not withstand the assault of men thus madly excited. They soon gave way, and fled for the defile of the Serrania de Ronda, where the body of troops had been stationed to secure a retreat. These, seeing them come galloping wildly up the defile, with Christian banners in pursuit, and the flash of weapons at their deadly

work, thought all Andalusia was upon them, and fled without awaiting an attack. The pursuit continued among glens and defiles; for the Christian warriors, eager for revenge, had no compassion on the foe.

When the pursuit was over, the marques of Cadiz and his followers reposed themselves upon the banks of the Guadalete, where they divided the spoil. Among this were found many rich corselets, helmets, and weapons,—the Moorish trophies of the defeat in the mountains of Malaga. Several were claimed by their owners; others were known to have belonged to noble cavaliers, who had been slain or taken prisoners. There were several horses also, richly caparisoned, which had pranced proudly with the unfortunate warriors, as they sallied out of Antiquera upon that fatal expedition. Thus the exultation of the victors was dashed with melancholy, and many a knight was seen lamenting over the helmet or corselet of some loved companion in arms.

The good marques of Cadiz was resting under a tree on the banks of the Guadalete, when the horse which had belonged to his slaughtered brother Beltram was brought to him. He laid his hand upon the mane, and looked wistfully at the empty saddle. His bosom heaved with violent agitation, and his lip quivered and was pale. “Ay de mi! mi hermano!” (wo is me! my brother!) was all that he said; for the grief of a warrior has not many words. He looked round on the field strewn with the bodies of the enemy, and in the bitterness of his wo he felt consoled by the idea that his brother had not been unrevenged.

Note.—“En el despojo de la Batalla se ireron muchas ricas corazas e capacetes, i barberas de las que se habian perdido en el Axarquia, e otras muchas armas, e algunes fueron conocidas de sus Dueños que las havian dejado por fuir, e otras fueron conocidas, que eran mui señal das de hombres principales que havian quedado muertos e cautivos, i fueron tornados muchos de los mismos Cavallos con sus ricas sillas, de los que quedaron en la Axarquia, e fueron concidos cuios eran.”—*Cura de los Palacios*, cap. 67.

CHAPTER XXIII.

RETREAT OF HEMET EL ZEGRI, ALCAYDE OF RONDA.

THE bold alcaide of Ronda, Hamet el Zegri, had careered wide over the Campiña of Utrera, encompassing the flocks and herds, when he heard the burst of war at a distance. There

were with him but a handful of his Gomeres. He saw the scamper and pursuit afar off, and beheld the Christian horsemen spurring madly on towards the ambuscade on the banks of the Lopera. Hamet tossed his hand triumphantly aloft, for his men to follow him. "The Christian dogs are ours!" said he, as he put spurs to his horse, to take the enemy in rear.

The little band, which followed Hamet, scarcely amounted to thirty horsemen. They spurred across the plain, and reached a rising ground, just as the force of Puerto Carrero had charged, with sound of trumpet, upon the flank of the party in ambush. Hamet beheld the headlong rout of the army, with rage and consternation. He found the country was pouring forth its legions from every quarter, and perceived that there was no safety but in precipitate flight.

But which way to fly? An army was between him and the mountain pass; all the forces of the neighborhood were rushing to the borders; the whole route by which he had come, was by this time occupied by the foe. He checked his steed, rose in the stirrups, and rolled a stern and thoughtful eye over the country; then sinking into his saddle, he seemed to commune a moment with himself. Turning quickly to his troop, he singled out a renegado christian, a traitor to his religion and his king. "Come hither," said Hamet. "Thou knowest all the secret passes of the country." "I do," replied the renegado. "Dost thou know any circuitous route, solitary and untravelled, by which we can pass wide within these troops, and reach the Serrania?" The renegado paused: "Such a route I know, but it is full of peril, for it leads through the heart of the Christian land." "'Tis well," said Hamet; "the more dangerous in appearance, the less it will be suspected. Now hearken to me. Ride by my side. Thou seest this purse of gold, and this scimitar. Take us, by the route thou hast mentioned, safe to the pass of the Serrania, and this purse shall be thy reward; betray us, and this scimitar shall cleave thee to the saddle-bow."*

The renegado obeyed, trembling. They turned off from the direct road to the mountains, and struck southward towards Lebrixa, passing by the most solitary roads, and along those deep ramblas and ravines by which the country is intersected. It was indeed a daring course. Every now and then they heard the distant sound of trumpets, and the alarm-bells of

* Cura de los Palacios. Ubi sup.

towns and villages, and found that the war was still hurrying to the borders. They hid themselves in thickets, and in the dry beds of rivers, until the danger had passed by, and then resumed their course. Hamet el Zegri rode on in silence, his hand upon his scimitar and his eye upon the renegado guide, prepared to sacrifice him on the least sign of treachery; while his band followed, gnawing their lips with rage, at having thus to skulk through a country they had come to ravage.

When night fell, they struck into more practicable roads, always keeping wide of the villages and hamlets, lest the watch-dogs should betray them. In this way, they passed in deep midnight by Areos, crossed the Guadalete, and effected their retreat to the mountains. The day dawned, as they made their way up the savage defiles. Their comrades had been hunted up these very glens by the enemy. Every now and then, they came to where there had been a partial fight, or a slaughter of the fugitives; and the rocks were red with blood, and strewn with mangled bodies. The alcaide of Ronda was almost frantic with rage, at seeing many of his bravest warriors lying stiff and stark, a prey to the hawks and vultures of the mountains. Now and then some wretched Moor would crawl out of a cave or glen, whither he had fled for refuge; for in the retreat, many of the horsemen had abandoned their steeds, thrown away their armor, and clambered up the cliffs, where they could not be pursued by the Christian cavalry.

The Moorish army had sallied forth from Ronda, amidst shouts and acclamations; but wailings were heard within its walls, as the alcaide and his broken band returned without banner or trumpet, and haggard with famine and fatigue. The tidings of their disaster had preceded them, borne by the fugitives of the army. No one ventured to speak to the stern Hamet el Zegri, as he entered the city; for they saw a dark cloud gathered upon his brow.

It seemed (says the pious Antonio Agapida) as if Heaven meted out this defeat in exact retribution for the ills inflicted upon the Christian warriors in the heights of Malaga. It was equally signal and disastrous. Of the brilliant array of Moorish chivalry, which had descended so confidently into Andalusia, not more than two hundred escaped. The choicest troops of the frontier were either taken or destroyed; the Moorish garrisons enfeebled; and many alcaides and cavaliers

of noble lineage carried into captivity, who were afterwards obliged to redeem themselves with heavy ransoms.

This was called the battle of Lopera, and was fought on the 17th of September, 1483. Ferdinand and Isabella were at Vittoria in old Castile, when they received news of the victory, and the standards taken from the enemy. They celebrated the event with processions, illuminations, and other festivities. Ferdinand sent to the marques of Cadiz the royal raiment which he had worn on that day, and conferred on him, and on all those who should inherit his title, the privilege of wearing royal robes on our Lady's day, in September, in commemoration of this victory.*

Queen Isabella was equally mindful of the great services of Don Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. Besides many encomiums and favors, she sent to his wife the royal vestments and robe of brocade which she had worn on the same day, to be worn by her, during her life, on the anniversary of that battle.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE RECEPTION AT COURT OF THE COUNT DE CABRA AND THE ALCAYDE DE LOS DONZELES.

In the midst of the bustle of warlike affairs, the worthy chronicler Fray Antonio Agapida pauses to note, with curious accuracy, the distinguished reception given to the count de Cabra and his nephew, the alcaide de los Donzeles, at the stately and ceremonious court of the Castilian sovereigns, in reward for the capture of the Moorish king Boabdil. The court (he observes) was held at the time in the ancient Moorish palace of the city of Cordova, and the ceremonials were arranged by that venerable prelate Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, bishop of Toledo and grand cardinal of Spain.

It was on Wednesday, the 14th of October, (continues the precise Antonio Agapida,) that the good count de Cabra, according to arrangement, appeared at the gate of Cordova. Here he was met by the grand cardinal, and the duke of Villahermosa, illegitimate brother of the king, together with

* Mariana, Abarca, Zurita, Pulgar, &c.

many of the first grandees and prelates of the kingdom. By this august train was he attended to the palace, amidst triumphant strains of martial music, and the shouts of a prodigious multitude.

When the count arrived in the presence of the sovereigns, who were seated in state on a dais or raised part of the hall of audience, they both arose. The king advanced exactly five steps towards the count, who knelt and kissed his majesty's hand; but the king would not receive him as a mere vassal, but embraced him with affectionate cordiality. The queen also advanced two steps, and received the count with a countenance full of sweetness and benignity: after he had kissed her hand, the king and queen returned to their thrones, and, cushions being brought, they ordered the count de Cabra to be seated in their presence. This last circumstance is written in large letters, and followed by several notes of admiration, in the manuscript of the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, who considers the extraordinary privilege of sitting in presence of the Catholic sovereigns an honor well worth fighting for.

The good count took his seat at a short distance from the king, and near him was seated the duke of Najera, then the bishop of Palencia, then the count of Aguilar, the count Luna, and Don Gutierre de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon.

On the side of the queen were seated the grand cardinal of Spain, the duke of Villahermosa, the count of Monte Rey, and the bishops of Jaen and Cuenca, each in the order in which they are named. The Infanta Isabella was prevented, by indisposition, from attending the ceremony.

And now festive music resounded through the hall, and twenty ladies of the queen's retinue entered magnificently attired; upon which twenty youthful cavaliers, very gay and galliard in their array, stepped forth, and, each seeking his fair partner, they commenced a stately dance. The court in the mean time (observes Fray Antonio Agapida) looked on with lofty and becoming gravity.

When the dance was concluded, the king and queen rose to retire to supper, and dismissed the count with many gracious expressions. He was then attended by all the grandees present to the palace of the grand cardinal, where they partook of a sumptuous banquet.

On the following Saturday, the alcaide de los Donzeles was received, likewise, with great honors; but the ceremonies were so arranged, as to be a degree less in dignity than those shown

to his uncle; the latter being considered the principal actor in this great achievement. Thus the grand cardinal and the duke of Villahermosa did not meet him at the gate of the city, but received him in the palace, and entertained him in conversation until summoned to the sovereigns.

When the alcaide de los Donzeles entered the presence chamber, the king and queen rose from their chairs, but without advancing. They greeted him graciously, and commanded him to be seated next to the count de Cabra.

The Infanta Isabella came forth to this reception, and took her seat beside the queen. When the court were all seated, the music again sounded through the hall, and the twenty ladies came forth as on the preceding occasion, richly attired, but in different raiment. They danced, as before; and the Infanta Isabella, taking a young Portuguese damsel for a partner, joined in the dance. When this was concluded, the king and queen dismissed the alcaide de los Donzeles with great courtesy and the court broke up.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida here indulges in a long eulogy on the scrupulous discrimination of the Castilian court, in the distribution of its honors and rewards, by which means every smile, and gesture, and word of the sovereigns, had its certain value, and conveyed its equivalent of joy to the heart of the subject;—a matter well worthy the study (says he) of all monarchs, who are too apt to distribute honors with a heedless caprice that renders them of no avail.

On the following Sunday, both the count de Cabra and the alcaide de los Donzeles were invited to sup with the sovereigns. The court that evening was attended by the highest nobility, arrayed with that cost and splendor for which the Spanish nobility of those days were renowned.

Before supper, there was a stately and ceremonious dance, befitting the dignity of so august a court. The king led forth the queen, in grave and graceful measure; the count de Cabra was honored with the hand of the Infanta Isabella; and the alcaide de los Donzeles danced with a daughter of the marques de Astorga.

The dance being concluded, the royal party repaired to the supper-table, which was placed on an elevated part of the saloon. Here, in full view of the court, the count de Cabra and the alcaide de los Donzeles supped at the same table with the king, the queen, and the Infanta. The royal family were served by the marques of Villena. The cupbearer to the king

was his nephew Fadrigue de Toledo, son to the duke of Alva. Don Alexis de Estañiga had the honor of fulfilling that office for the queen, and Tello de Aguilar for the Infanta. Other cavaliers of rank and distinction waited on the count and the alcaide de los Donzeles. At one o'clock, the two distinguished guests were dismissed with many courteous expressions by the sovereigns.

Such (says Fray Antonio Agapida) were the great honors paid at our most exalted and ceremonious court, to these renowned cavaliers: but the gratitude of the sovereigns did not end here. A few days afterwards, they bestowed upon them large revenues for life, and others to descend to their heirs, with the privilege for them and their descendants to prefix the title of Don to their names. They gave them, moreover, as armorial bearings, a Moor's head crowned, with a golden chain round the neck, in a sanguine field, and twenty-two banners round the margin of the escutcheon. Their descendants, of the houses of Cabra and Cordova, continue to bear these arms at the present day, in memorial of the victory of Lucena and the capture of Boabdil el Chico.*

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW THE MARQUES OF CADIZ CONCERTED TO SURPRISE ZAHARA,
AND THE RESULT OF HIS ENTERPRISE.

THE valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, was one of the most vigilant of commanders. He kept in his pay a number of converted Moors, to serve as adalides, or armed guides. These mongrel Christians were of great service, in procuring information. Availing themselves of their Moorish character and tongue, they penetrated into the enemy's country, prowled about the castles and fortresses, noticed the state of the walls, the gates and towers, the strength of their garrison, and the vigilance or negligence of their commanders. All this they reported minutely to the marques, who thus

* The account given by Fray Antonio Agapida of this ceremonial, so characteristic of the old Spanish court, agrees in almost every particular with an ancient manuscript, made up from the chronicles of the curate of los Palacios and other old Spanish writers.

knew the state of every fortress upon the frontier, and when it might be attacked with advantage. Beside the various towns and cities over which he held a feudal sway, he had always an armed force about him ready for the field. A host of retainers fed in his hall, who were ready to follow him to danger and death itself, without inquiring who or why they fought. The armories of his castles were supplied with helms and cuirasses and weapons of all kinds, ready burnished for use; and his stables were filled with hardy steeds, that could stand a mountain scamper.

The marques was aware that the late defeat of the Moors on the banks of the Lopera, had weakened their whole frontier; for many of the castles and fortresses had lost their alcaides, and their choicest troops. He sent out his war-hounds, therefore, upon the range to ascertain where a successful blow might be struck; and they soon returned, with word that Zahara was weakly garrisoned and short of provisions.

This was the very fortress, which, about two years before, had been stormed by Muley Aben Hassan; and its capture had been the first blow of this eventful war. It had ever since remained a thorn in the side of Andalusia. All the Christians had been carried away captive, and no civil population had been introduced in their stead. There were no women or children in the place. It was kept up as a mere military post, commanding one of the most important passes of the mountains, and was a strong-hold of Moorish marauders. The marques was animated by the idea of regaining this fortress for his sovereigns, and wresting from the old Moorish king this boasted trophy of his prowess. He sent missives therefore to the brave Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, who had distinguished himself in the late victory, and to Juan Almaraz, captain of the men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood, informing them of his designs, and inviting them to meet him with their forces on the banks of the Guadalete.

It was on the day (says Fray Antonio Agapida) of the glorious apostles St. Simon and Judas, the twenty-eighth of October, in the year of grace one thousand four hundred and eighty-three, that this chosen band of Christian soldiers assembled suddenly and secretly at the appointed place. Their forces, when united, amounted to six hundred horse and fifteen hundred foot. Their gathering place was at the entrance of the defile leading to Zahara. That ancient town, renowned in Moorish warfare, is situated in one of the roughest passes of

the Serrania de Ronda. It is built round the craggy cone of a hill, on the lofty summit of which is a strong castle. The country around is broken into deep barrancas or ravines, some of which approach its very walls. The place had until recently been considered impregnable; but (as the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida observes) the walls of impregnable fortresses, like the virtue of self-confident saints, have their weak points of attack.

The marques of Cadiz advanced with his little army in the dead of the night, marching silently into the deep and dark defiles of the mountains, and stealing up the ravines which extended to the walls of the town. Their approach was so noiseless, that the Moorish sentinels upon the walls heard not a voice or a footfall. The marques was accompanied by his old escalador, Ortega de Prado, who had distinguished himself at the scaling of Alhama. This hardy veteran was stationed, with ten men, furnished with scaling-ladders, in a cavity among the rocks, close to the walls. At a little distance, seventy men were hid in a ravine, to be at hand to second him, when he should have fixed his ladders. The rest of the troops were concealed in another ravine, commanding a fair approach to the gate of the fortress. A shrewd and wary adalid, well acquainted with the place, was appointed to give signals; and was so stationed, that he could be seen by the various parties in ambush, but was hidden from the garrison.

The remainder of the night passed away in profound quiet. The Moorish sentinels could be heard tranquilly patrolling the walls, in perfect security. The day dawned, and the rising sun began to shine against the lofty peaks of the Serrania de Ronda. The sentinels looked from their battlements over a savage but quiet mountain country, where not a human being was stirring; they little dreamt of the mischief that lay lurking in every ravine and chasm of the rocks around them. Apprehending no danger of surprise in broad day, the greater part of the soldiers abandoned the walls and towers, and descended into the city.

By orders of the marques, a small body of light cavalry passed along the glen, and, turning round a point of rock, showed themselves before the town: they skirred the fields almost to the gates, as if by way of bravado, and to defy the garrison to a skirmish. The Moors were not slow in replying to it. About seventy horse, and a number of foot who had guarded the walls, sallied forth impetuously, thinking to make

easy prey of these insolent marauders. The Christian horsemen fled for the ravine; the Moors pursued them down the hill, until they heard a great shouting and tumult behind them. Looking round, they beheld their town assailed, and a scaling party mounting the walls sword in hand. Wheeling about, they galloped furiously for the gate; the marques of Cadiz and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero rushed forth at the same time with their ambuscade, and endeavored to cut them off; but the Moors succeeded in throwing themselves within the walls.

While Puerto Carrero stormed at the gate, the marques put spurs to his horse and galloped to the support of Ortega de Prado and his scaling party. He arrived at a moment of imminent peril, when the party was assailed by fifty Moors, armed with cuirasses and lances, who were on the point of thrusting them from the walls. The marques sprang from his horse, mounted a ladder, sword in hand, followed by a number of his troops, and made a vigorous attack upon the enemy.* They were soon driven from the walls, and the gates and towers remained in possession of the Christians. The Moors defended themselves for a short time in the streets, but at length took refuge in the castle, the walls of which were strong, and capable of holding out until relief should arrive. The marques had no desire to carry on a siege, and he had not provisions sufficient for many prisoners; he granted them, therefore, favorable terms. They were permitted, on leaving their arms behind them, to march out with as much of their effects as they could carry; and it was stipulated that they should pass over to Barbary. The marques remained in the place until both town and castle were put in a perfect state of defence, and strongly garrisoned.

Thus did Zahara return once more into possession of the Christians, to the great confusion of old Muley Aben Hassan, who, having paid the penalty of his ill-timed violence, was now deprived of its vaunted fruits. The Castilian sovereigns were so gratified by this achievement of the valiant Ponce de Leon, that they authorized him thenceforth to entitle himself duke of Cadiz and marques of Zahara. The warrior, however, was so proud of the original title, under which he had so often signalized himself, that he gave it the precedence, and always signed himself, marques, duke of Cadiz. As the reader may

* *Cura de los Palacios*. c. 78.

have acquired the same predilection, we shall continue to call him by his ancient title.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THE FORTRESS OF ALHAMA, AND HOW WISELY IT WAS GOVERNED BY THE COUNT DE TENDILLA.

IN this part of the chronicle, the worthy father Fray Antonio Agapida indulges in triumphant exultation over the downfall of Zahara: Heaven sometimes speaks (says he) through the mouths of false prophets for the confusion of the wicked. By the fall of this fortress was the prediction of the santón of Granada in some measure fulfilled, that "the ruins of Zahara should fall upon the heads of the infidels."

Our zealous chronicler scoffs at the Moorish alcaide, who lost his fortress by surprise in broad daylight; and contrasts the vigilance of the Christian governor of Alhama, the town taken in retaliation for the storming of Zahara.

The important post of Alhama was at this time confided by king Ferdinand to Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, count of Tendilla, a cavalier of noble blood, brother to the grand cardinal of Spain. He had been instructed by the king, not merely to maintain his post, but also to make sallies and lay waste the surrounding country. His fortress was critically situated. It was within seven leagues of Granada, and at no great distance from the warlike city of Loxa. It was nestled in the lap of the mountains, commanding the high-road to Malaga and a view over the extensive vega. Thus situated, in the heart of the enemy's country, surrounded by foes ready to assail him, and a rich country for him to ravage, it behoved this cavalier to be for ever on the alert. He was in fact an experienced veteran, a shrewd and wary officer, and a commander amazingly prompt and fertile in expedients.

On assuming the command, he found that the garrison consisted but of one thousand men, horse and foot. They were hardy troops, seasoned in rough mountain campaigning, but reckless and dissolute, as soldiers are apt to be when accustomed to predatory warfare. They would fight hard for booty, and then gamble it heedlessly away, or squander it in

licentious revelling. Alhama abounded with hawking, sharping, idle hangers-on, eager to profit by the vices and follies of the garrison. The soldiers were oftener gambling and dancing beneath the walls, than keeping watch upon the battlements; and nothing was heard, from morning till night, but the noisy contest of cards and dice, mingled with the sound of the bolero or fandango, the drowsy strumming of the guitar, and the rattling of the castanets; while often the whole was interrupted by the loud brawl, and fierce and bloody contest.

The count of Tendilla set himself vigorously to reform these excesses; he knew that laxity of morals is generally attended by neglect of duty, and that the least breach of discipline in the exposed situation of his fortress might be fatal. "Here is but a handful of men," said he; "it is necessary that each man should be a hero."

He endeavored to awaken a proper ambition in the minds of his soldiers, and to instil into them the high principles of chivalry. "A just war," he observed, "is often rendered wicked and disastrous by the manner in which it is conducted; for the righteousness of the cause is not sufficient to sanction the profligacy of the means, and the want of order and subordination among the troops may bring ruin and disgrace upon the best concerted plans." But we cannot describe the character and conduct of this renowned commander in more forcible language than that of Fray Antonio Agapida, excepting that the pious father places in the foreground of his virtues his hatred of the Moors. "The count de Tendilla," says he, "was a mirror of Christian knighthood—watchful, abstemious, chaste, devout, and thoroughly filled with the spirit of the cause. He labored incessantly and strenuously for the glory of the faith, and the prosperity of their most Catholic majesties; and, above all, he hated the infidels with a pure and holy hatred. The worthy cavalier discountenanced all idleness, rioting, chambering, and wantonness among his soldiery. He kept them constantly to the exercise of arms, making them adroit in the use of their weapons and management of their steeds, and prompt for the field at a moment's notice. He permitted no sound of lute or harp, or song, or other loose minstrelsy, to be heard in his fortress, debauching the ear and softening the valor of the soldier; no other music was allowed but the wholesome rolling of the drum and braying of the trumpet, and such like spirit-stirring instruments as fill the mind with thoughts of

iron war. All wandering minstrels, sharpening pedlars, sturdy trulls, and other camp trumpery, were ordered to pack up their baggage, and were drummed out of the gates of Alhama. In place of such lewd rabble, he introduced a train of holy friars to inspirit his people by exhortation, and prayer, and choral chanting, and to spur them on to fight the good fight of faith. All games of chance were prohibited, except the game of war; and this he labored, by vigilance and vigor, to reduce to a game of certainty. Heaven smiled upon the efforts of this righteous cavalier. His men became soldiers at all points, and terrors to the Moors. The good count never set forth on a ravage, without observing the rites of confession, absolution, and communion, and obliging his followers to do the same. Their banners were blessed by the holy friars whom he maintained in Alhama; and in this way success was secured to his arms, and he was enabled to lay waste the land of the heathen.

The fortress of Alhama (continues Fray Antonio Agapida) overlooked from its lofty site a great part of the fertile vega, watered by the Cazin and the Xenel: from this he made frequent sallies, sweeping away the flocks and herds from the pasture, the laborer from the field, and the convoy from the road; so that it was said by the Moors, that a beetle could not crawl across the vega without being seen by count Tendilla. The peasantry, therefore, were fain to betake themselves to watch-towers and fortified hamlets, where they shut up their cattle, garnered their corn, and sheltered their wives and children. Even there they were not safe; the count would storm these rustic fortresses with fire and sword; make captives of their inhabitants; carry off the corn, the oil, the silks, and cattle; and leave the ruins blazing and smoking, within the very sight of Granada.

"It was a pleasing and refreshing sight," continues the good father, "to behold this pious knight and his followers returning from one of these crusades, leaving the rich land of the infidel in smoking desolation behind them; to behold the long line of mules and asses, laden with the plunder of the Gentiles—the hosts of captive Moors, men, women, and children—droves of sturdy beeves, lowing kine, and bleating sheep; all winding up the steep acclivity to the gates of Alhama, pricked on by the Catholic soldiery. His garrison thus thrived on the fat of the land and the spoil of the infidel; nor was he unmindful of the pious fathers, whose blessings crowned his enterprises with success. A large portion of the spoil was always

dedicated to the church; and the good friars were ever ready at the gate to hail him on his return, and receive the share allotted them. Beside these allotments, he made many votive offerings, either in time of peril or on the eve of a foray; and the chapels of Alhama were resplendent with chalices, crosses, and other precious gifts made by this Catholic cavalier."

Thus eloquently does the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida dilate in praise of the good count de Tendilla; and other historians of equal veracity, but less unction, agree in pronouncing him one of the ablest of Spanish generals. So terrible in fact did he become in the land, that the Moorish peasantry could not venture a league from Granada or Loxa to labor in the fields, without peril of being carried into captivity. The people of Granada clamored against Muley Aben Hassan, for suffering his lands to be thus outraged and insulted, and demanded to have this bold marauder shut up in his fortress. The old monarch was roused by their remonstrances. He sent forth powerful troops of horse, to protect the country, during the season that the husbandmen were abroad in the fields. These troops patrolled in formidable squadrons in the neighborhood of Alhama, keeping strict watch upon its gates; so that it was impossible for the Christians to make a sally, without being seen and intercepted.

While Alhama was thus blockaded by a roving force of Moorish cavalry, the inhabitants were awakened one night by a tremendous crash, that shook the fortress to its foundations. The garrison flew to arms, supposing it some assault of the enemy. The alarm proved to have been caused by the rupture of a portion of the wall, which, undermined by heavy rains, had suddenly given way, leaving a large chasm yawning in towards the plain.

The count de Tendilla was for a time in great anxiety. Should this breach be discovered by the blockading horsemen, they would arouse the country, Granada and Loxa would pour out an overwhelming force, and they would find his walls ready sapped for an assault. In this fearful emergency, the count displayed his noted talent for expedients. He ordered a quantity of linen cloth to be stretched in front of the breach, painted in imitation of stone, and indented with battlements, so as at a distance to resemble the other parts of the wall: behind this scene he employed workmen, day and night, in repairing the fracture. No one was permitted to leave the fortress, lest information of its defenceless plight should be carried

to the Moor. Light squadrons of the enemy were seen hovering about the plain, but never approached near enough to discover the deception; and thus, in the course of a few days, the wall was rebuilt stronger than before.

There was another expedient of this shrewd veteran, which greatly excites the marvel of Agapida. "It happened," he observes, "that this Catholic cavalier at one time was destitute of gold and silver, wherewith to pay the wages of his troops; and the soldiers murmured greatly, seeing that they had not the means of purchasing necessities from the people of the town. In this dilemma, what does this most sagacious commander? He takes me a number of little morsels of paper, on the which he inscribes various sums, large and small, according to the nature of the case, and signs me them with his own hand and name. These did he give to the soldiery, in earnest of their pay. 'How!' you will say, 'are soldiers to be paid with scraps of paper?' Even so, I answer, and well paid too, as I will presently make manifest: for the good count issued a proclamation, ordering the inhabitants of Alhama to take these morsels of paper for the full amount thereon inscribed, promising to redeem them at a future time with silver and gold, and threatening severe punishment to all who should refuse. The people, having full confidence in his word, and trusting that he would be as willing to perform the one promise as he certainly was able to perform the other, took those curious morsels of paper without hesitation or demur. Thus, by a subtle and most miraculous kind of alchymy, did this Catholic cavalier turn worthless paper into precious gold, and make his late impoverished garrison abound in money!"

It is but just to add, that the count de Tendilla redeemed his promises, like a loyal knight; and this miracle, as it appeared in the eyes of Fray Antonio Agapida, is the first instance on record of paper money, which has since inundated the civilized world with unbounded opulence.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FORAY OF CHRISTIAN KNIGHTS INTO THE TERRITORY OF THE MOORS.

THE Spanish cavaliers who had survived the memorable massacre among the mountains of Malaga, although they had repeatedly avenged the death of their companions, yet could not forget the horror and humiliation of their defeat. Nothing would satisfy them but to undertake a second expedition of the kind, to carry fire and sword throughout a wide part of the Moorish territories, and to leave all those regions which had triumphed in their disaster a black and burning monument of their vengeance. Their wishes accorded with the policy of the king, who desired to lay waste the country and destroy the resources of the enemy; every assistance was therefore given to promote and accomplish their enterprize.

In the spring of 1484, the ancient city of Antiquera again resounded with arms; numbers of the same cavaliers who had assembled there so gayly the preceding year, again came wheeling into the gates with their steeled and shining warriors, but with a more dark and solemn brow than on that disastrous occasion, for they had the recollection of their slaughtered friends present to their minds, whose deaths they were to avenge.

In a little while there was a chosen force of six thousand horse and twelve thousand foot assembled in Antiquera, many of them the very flower of Spanish chivalry, troops of the established military and religious orders, and of the Holy Brotherhood.

Every precaution had been taken to furnish this army with all things needful for its extensive and perilous inroad. Numerous surgeons accompanied it, who were to attend upon all the sick and wounded, without charge, being paid for their services by the queen. Isabella, also, in her considerate humanity, provided six spacious tents furnished with beds and all things needful for the wounded and infirm. These continued to be used in all great expeditions throughout the war, and were called the Queen's Hospital. The worthy father, Fray Antonio Agapida, vaunts this benignant provision of the queen, as the first introduction of a regular camp hospital in campaigning service.

Thus thoroughly prepared, the cavaliers issued forth from Antiquera in splendid and terrible array, but with less exulting confidence and vaunting ostentation than on their former foray; and this was the order of the army. Don Alonzo de Aguilar led the advance guard, accompanied by Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova, the alcaide de los Donzeles, and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, count of Palma, with their household toops. They were followed by Juan de Merlo, Juan de Almara, and Carlos de Biezman, of the Holy Brotherhood, with the men-at-arms of their captaincies.

The second battalion was commanded by the marques of Cadiz and the Master of Santiago, with the cavaliers of Santiago and the troops of the house of Ponce de Leon: with these also went the senior commander of Calatrava and the knights of that order, and various other cavaliers and their retainers.

The right wing of this second battalion was led by Gonsalvo de Cordova, afterwards renowned as grand captain of Spain; the left wing, by Diego Lopez de Avila. They were accompanied by several distinguished cavaliers, and certain captains of the Holy Brotherhood, with their men-at-arms.

The duke of Medina Sidonia and the count de Cabra commanded the third battalion, with the troops of their respective houses. They were accompanied by other commanders of note, with their forces.

The rear-guard was brought up by the senior commander and knights of Alcantara, followed by the Andalusian chivalry from Xerez, Ecija, and Carmona.

Such was the army that issued forth from the gates of Antiquera, on one of the most extensive *talas*, or devastating incursions, that ever laid waste the kingdom of Granada.

The army entered the Moorish territory by the way of Alora, destroying all the cornfields, vineyards, and orchards, and plantations of olives, round that city. It then proceeded through the rich valleys and fertile uplands of Coin, Cazaronela, Almeria, and Cartama; and in ten days, all those fertile regions were a smoking and frightful desert. From hence it pursued its slow and destructive course, like the stream of lava of a volcano, through the regions of Papiana and Alhendin, and so on to the vega of Malaga, laying waste the groves of olives and almonds, and the fields of grain, and destroying every green thing. The Moors of some of these places interceded in vain for their groves and fields, offering to deliver up their Christian captives. One part of the army blockaded

the towns, while the other ravaged the surrounding country. Sometimes the Moors sallied forth desperately to defend their property, but were driven back to their gates with slaughter, and their suburbs pillaged and burnt. It was an awful spectacle at night to behold the volumes of black smoke mingled with lurid flames that rose from the burning suburbs, and the women on the walls of the town wringing their hands and shrieking at the desolation of their dwellings.

The destroying army, on arriving at the sea-coast, found vessels lying off shore laden with all kinds of provisions and munitions for its use, which had been sent from Seville and Xerez: it was thus enabled to continue its desolating career. Advancing to the neighborhood of Malaga, it was bravely assailed by the Moors of that city, and there was severe skirmishing for a whole day; but while the main part of the army encountered the enemy, the rest ravaged the whole vega and destroyed all the mills. As the object of the expedition was not to capture places, but merely to burn, ravage, and destroy, the host, satisfied with the mischief they had done in the vega, turned their backs upon Malaga, and again entered the mountains. They passed by Coin, and through the regions of Allazayna, and Gatero, and Alhaurin; all which were likewise desolated. In this way did they make the circuit of that chain of rich and verdant valleys, the glory of those mountains and the pride and delight of the Moors. For forty days did they continue on like a consuming fire, leaving a smoking and howling waste to mark their course, until, weary with the work of destruction, and having fully sated their revenge for the massacre of the Axarquía, they returned in triumph to the meadows of Antiquera.

In the month of June, king Ferdinand took command in person of this destructive army; he increased its force, and added to its means of mischief several lombards and other heavy artillery, intended for the battering of towns, and managed by engineers from France and Germany. With these, the marques of Cadiz assured the king, he would soon be able to reduce the Moorish fortresses. They were only calculated for defence against the engines anciently used in warfare. Their walls and towers were high and thin, depending for security on their rough and rocky situations. The stone and iron balls thundered from the lombards would soon tumble them in ruins upon the heads of their defenders.

The fate of Alora speedily proved the truth of this opinion.

It was strongly posted on a rock washed by a river. The artillery soon battered down two of the towers and a part of the wall. The Moors were thrown into consternation at the vehemence of the assault, and the effect of those tremendous engines upon their vaunted bulwarks. The roaring of the artillery and the tumbling of the walls terrified the women, who beset the alcaide with vociferous supplications to surrender. The place was given up on the 20th of June, on condition that the inhabitants might depart with their effects. The people of Malaga, as yet unacquainted with the power of this battering ordnance, were so incensed at those of Alora for what they considered a tame surrender, that they would not admit them into their city.

A similar fate attended the town of Setenil, built on a lofty rock and esteemed impregnable. Many times had it been besieged under former Christian kings, but never had it been taken. Even now, for several days the artillery was directed against it without effect, and many of the cavaliers murmured at the marques of Cadiz for having counselled the king to attack this unconquerable place.*

On the same night that these reproaches were uttered, the marques directed the artillery himself: he levelled the lombards at the bottom of the walls, and at the gates. In a little while, the gates were battered to pieces, a great breach was effected in the walls, and the Moors were fain to capitulate. Twenty-four Christian captives, who had been taken in the defeat of the mountains of Malaga, were rescued from the dungeons of this fortress, and hailed the marques of Cadiz as their deliverer.

Needless is it to mention the capture of various other places, which surrendered without waiting to be attacked. The Moors had always shown great bravery and perseverance in defending their towns; they were formidable in their sallies and skirmishes, and patient in enduring hunger and thirst when besieged; but this terrible ordnance, which demolished their walls with such ease and rapidity, overwhelmed them with confusion and dismay, and rendered vain all resistance. King Ferdinand was so struck with the effect of this artillery, that he ordered the number of lombards to be increased; and these potent engines had henceforth a great influence on the fortunes of this war.

* *Cura de los Palacios.*

The last operation of this year, so disastrous to the Moors, was an inroad by king Ferdinand, in the latter part of summer, into the vega, in which he ravaged the country, burnt two villages near to Granada, and destroyed the mills near the very gates of the city.

Old Muley Aben Hassan was overwhelmed with dismay at this desolation, which, during the whole year, had been raging throughout his territories, and had now reached to the walls of his capital. His fierce spirit was broken by misfortunes and infirmity; he offered to purchase a peace, and to hold his crown as a tributary vassal. Ferdinand would listen to no propositions: the absolute conquest of Granada was the great object of this war, and he was resolved never to rest content without its complete fulfilment. Having supplied and strengthened the garrisons of the places he had taken in the heart of the Moorish territories, he enjoined their commanders to render every assistance to the younger Moorish king, in the civil war against his father. He then returned with his army to Cordova, in great triumph, closing a series of ravaging campaigns, that had filled the kingdom of Granada with grief and consternation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ATTEMPT OF EL ZAGAL TO SURPRISE BOABDIL IN ALMERIA.

DURING this year of sorrow and disaster to the Moors, the younger king Boabdil, most truly called the unfortunate, held a diminished and feeble court in the maritime city of Almeria. He retained little more than the name of king, and was supported in even this shadow of royalty, by the countenance and treasures of the Castilian sovereigns. Still he trusted, that, in the fluctuation of events, the inconstant nation might once more return to his standard, and replace him on the throne of the Alhambra.

His mother, the high-spirited sultana Ayxa la Horra, endeavored to rouse him from this passive state. "It is a feeble mind," said she, "that waits for the turn of fortune's wheel; the brave mind seizes upon it, and turns it to its purpose. Take the field, and you may drive danger before you; remain cowering at home, and it besieges you in your dwelling. By

a bold enterprise you may regain your splendid throne in Granada; by passive forbearance, you will forfeit even this miserable throne in Almeria."

Boabdil had not the force of soul to follow these courageous counsels, and in a little time the evils his mother had predicted fell upon him.

Old Muley Aben Hassan was almost extinguished by age and infirmity. He had nearly lost his sight, and was completely bedridden. His brother Abdallah, surnamed El Zagal, or the valiant, the same who had assisted in the massacre of the Spanish chivalry among the mountains of Malaga, was commander-in-chief of the Moorish armies, and gradually took upon himself most of the cares of sovereignty. Among other things, he was particularly zealous in espousing his brother's quarrel with his son; and he prosecuted it with such vehemence, that many affirmed there was something more than mere fraternal sympathy at the bottom of his zeal.

The disasters and disgraces inflicted on the country by the Christians during this year, had wounded the national feelings of the people of Almeria; and many had felt indignant that Boabdil should remain passive at such a time, or rather, should appear to make a common cause with the enemy. His uncle Abdallah diligently fomented this feeling, by his agents. The same arts were made use of, that had been successful in Granada. Boabdil was secretly but actively denounced by the alfaquis as an apostate, leagued with the Christians against his country and his early faith; the affections of the populace and soldiery were gradually alienated from him, and a deep conspiracy concerted for his destruction.

In the month of February, 1485, El Zagal suddenly appeared before Almeria, at the head of a troop of horse. The alfaquis were prepared for his arrival, and the gates were thrown open to him. He entered with his band, and galloped to the citadel. The alcayde would have made resistance; but the garrison put him to death, and received El Zagal with acclamations. El Zagal rushed through the apartments of the Alcazar, but he sought in vain for Boabdil. He found the sultana Ayxa la Horra in one of the saloons, with Ben Ahagete, a younger brother of the monarch, a valiant Abencerrage, and several attendants, who rallied round them to protect them. "Where is the traitor Boabdil?" exclaimed El Zagal. "I know no traitor more perfidious than thyself," exclaimed the intrepid sultana; "and I trust my son is in safety to take ven-

geance on thy treason." The rage of El Zagal was without bounds, when he learnt that his intended victim had escaped. In his fury he slew the prince Ben Ahagete, and his followers fell upon and massacred the Abencerrage and attendants. As to the proud sultana, she was borne away prisoner, and loaded with revilings, as having upheld her son in his rebellion, and fomented a civil war.

The unfortunate Boabdil had been apprised of his danger by a faithful soldier, just in time to make his escape. Throwing himself on one of the fleetest horses in his stables, and followed by a handful of adherents, he had galloped in the confusion out of the gates of Almeria. Several of the cavalry of El Zagal, who were stationed without the walls, perceived his flight, and attempted to pursue him; their horses were jaded with travel, and he soon left them far behind. But, whither was he to fly? Every fortress and castle in the kingdom of Granada was closed against him; he knew not whom among the Moors to trust, for they had been taught to detest him as a traitor and an apostate. He had no alternative but to seek refuge among the Christians, his hereditary enemies. With a heavy heart, he turned his horse's head toward Cordova. He had to lurk, like a fugitive, through a part of his own dominions; nor did he feel himself secure, until he had passed the frontier, and beheld the mountain barrier of his country towering behind him. Then it was that he became conscious of his humiliating state—a fugitive from his throne, an outcast from his nation, a king without a kingdom. He smote his breast, in an agony of grief: "Evil indeed," exclaimed he, "was the day of my birth, and truly was I named El Zogoybi, the unlucky."

He entered the gates of Cordova with downcast countenance, and with a train of but forty followers. The sovereigns were absent; but the cavaliers of Andalusia manifested that sympathy in the misfortunes of the monarch, that becomes men of lofty and chivalrous souls. They received him with great distinction, attended him with the utmost courtesy, and he was honorably entertained by the civil and military commanders of that ancient city.

In the mean time, El Zagal put a new alcaide over Almeria, to govern in the name of his brother; and, having strongly garrisoned the place, he repaired to Malaga, where an attack of the Christians was apprehended. The young monarch being driven out of the land, and the old monarch blind and bedridden, El Zagal, at the head of the armies, was virtually the

sovereign of Granada. The people were pleased with having a new idol to look up to, and a new name to shout forth; and El Zagal was hailed with acclamations, as the main hope of the nation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOW KING FERDINAND COMMENCED ANOTHER CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MOORS, AND HOW HE LAID SIEGE TO COIN AND CARTAMA.

THE great effect of the battering ordnance in demolishing the Moorish fortresses in the preceding year, induced king Ferdinand to procure a powerful train for the campaign of 1485, in the course of which he resolved to assault some of the most formidable holds of the enemy. An army of nine thousand cavalry and twenty thousand infantry assembled at Cordova, early in the spring; and the king took the field on the 5th of April. It had been determined in secret council, to attack the city of Malaga, that ancient and important sea-port, on which Granada depended for foreign aid and supplies. It was thought proper previously, however, to get possession of various towns and fortresses in the valleys of Santa Maria and Cartama, through which pass the roads to Malaga.

The first place assailed was the town of Benamaquex. It had submitted to the Catholic sovereigns in the preceding year, but had since renounced its allegiance. King Ferdinand was enraged at the rebellion of the inhabitants. "I will make their punishment," said he, "a terror to others: they shall be loyal through force, if not through faith." The place was carried by storm: one hundred and eight of the principal inhabitants were either put to the sword or hanged on the battlements; the rest were carried into captivity.*

The towns of Coin and Cartama were besieged on the same day; the first by a division of the army led on by the marques of Cadiz, the second by another division commanded by Don Alonzo de Aguilar and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, the brave Senior of Palma. The king, with the rest of the army, remained posted between the two places, to render assistance to either division. The batteries opened upon both places at

* Fulgar, Garibay, Cura de los Palacios.

the same time, and the thunder of the lombards was mutually heard from one camp to the other. The Moors made frequent sallies, and a valiant defence; but they were confounded by the tremendous uproar of the batteries, and the destruction of their walls. In the mean time, the alarm-fires gathered together the Moorish mountaineers of all the Serrania, who assembled in great numbers in the city of Monda, about a league from Coin. They made several attempts to enter the besieged town, but in vain; they were each time intercepted and driven back by the Christians, and were reduced to gaze at a distance in despair on the destruction of the place. While thus situated, there rode one day into Monda a fierce and haughty Moorish chieftain, at the head of a band of swarthy African horsemen; it was Hamet el Zegri, the fiery-spirited alcaide of Ronda, at the head of his band of Gomeres. He had not yet recovered from the rage and mortification of his defeat on the banks of the Lopera, in the disastrous foray of old Bexir, when he had been obliged to steal back furtively to his mountains, with the loss of the bravest of his followers. He had ever since panted for revenge. He now rode among the host of warriors-assembled at Monda. "Who among you," cried he, "feels pity for the women and children of Coin, exposed to captivity and death? Whoever he is, let him follow me, who am ready to die as a Moslem for the relief of Moslems." So saying, he seized a white banner, and, waving it over his head, rode forth from the town, followed by the Gomeres. Many of the warriors, roused by his words and his example, spurred resolutely after his banner. The people of Coin, being prepared for this attempt, sallied forth as they saw the white banner, and made an attack upon the Christian camp; and in the confusion of the moment, Hamet and his followers galloped into the gates. This reinforcement animated the besieged, and Hamet exhorted them to hold out obstinately in defence of life and town. As the Gomeres were veteran warriors, the more they were attacked the harder they fought.

At length, a great breach was made in the walls, and Ferdinand, who was impatient of the resistance of the place, ordered the duke of Naxera and the count of Benavente to enter with their troops; and as their forces were not sufficient, he sent word to Luis de Cerda, duke of Medina Celi, to send a part of his people to their assistance.

The feudal pride of the duke was roused at this demand. "Tell my lord the king," said the haughty grandee, "that I

have come to succor him with my household troops: if my people are ordered to any place, I am to go with them; but if I am to remain in the camp, my people must remain with me. For the troops cannot serve without their commander, nor their commander without his troops."

The reply of the high-spirited grandee perplexed the cautious Ferdinand, who knew the jealous pride of his powerful nobles. In the mean time, the people of the camp, having made all preparations for the assault, were impatient to be led forward. Upon this, Pero Ruyz de Alarcon put himself at their head, and, seizing their mantas, or portable bulwarks, and their other defences, they made a gallant assault, and fought their way in at the breach. The M^oors were so overcome by the fury of their assault, that they retreated fighting to the square of the town. Pero Ruyz de Alarcon thought the place was carried, when suddenly Hamet and his Gomeres came scouring through the streets with wild war-cries, and fell furiously upon the Christians. The latter were in their turn beaten back, and, while attacked in front by the Gomeres, were assailed by the inhabitants with all kinds of missiles from their roofs and windows. They at length gave way, and retreated through the breach. Pero Ruyz de Alarcon still maintained his ground in one of the principal streets—the few cavaliers that stood by him urged him to fly: "No," said he; "I came here to fight, and not to fly." He was presently surrounded by the Gomeres; his companions fled for their lives; the last they saw of him, he was covered with wounds, but still fighting desperately for the fame of a good cavalier.*

The resistance of the inhabitants, though aided by the valor of the Gomeres, was of no avail. The battering artillery of the Christians demolished their walls; combustibles were thrown into their town, which set it on fire in various places; and they were at length compelled to capitulate. They were permitted to depart with their effects, and the Gomeres with their arms. Hamet el Zegri and his African band sallied forth, and rode proudly through the Christian camp; nor could the Spanish cavaliers refrain from regarding with admiration that haughty warrior and his devoted and dauntless followers.

The capture of Coin was accompanied by that of Cartama: the fortifications of the latter were repaired and garrisoned; but Coin being too extensive to be defended by a moderate

* Pulgar, part 3, cap. 42.

force, its walls were demolished. The siege of these places struck such terror into the surrounding country that the Moors of many of the neighboring towns abandoned their homes, and fled with such of their effects as they could carry away; upon which the king gave orders to demolish their walls and towers.

King Ferdinand now left his camp and his heavy artillery near Cartama, and proceeded with his lighter troops to reconnoitre Malaga. By this time, the secret plan of attack, arranged in the council of war at Cordova, was known to all the world. The vigilant warrior El Zagal had thrown himself into the place; he had put all the fortifications, which were of vast strength, into a state of defence; and had sent orders to the alcaides of the mountain town, to hasten with their forces to his assistance.

The very day that Ferdinand appeared before the place, El Zagal sallied forth to receive him, at the head of a thousand cavalry, the choicest warriors of Granada. A hot skirmish took place among the gardens and olive-trees near the city. Many were killed on both sides; and this gave the Christians a sharp foretaste of what they might expect, if they attempted to besiege the place.

When the skirmish was over, the marques of Cadiz had a private conference with the king. He represented the difficulty of besieging Malaga with their present force, especially as their plans had been discovered and anticipated, and the whole country was marching over the mountains to oppose them. The marques, who had secret intelligence from all quarters, had received a letter from Juceph Xerife, a Moor of Ronda, of Christian lineage, apprising him of the situation of that important place and its garrison, which at that moment laid it open to attack; and the marques was urgent with the king to seize upon this critical moment, and secure a place which was one of the most powerful Moorish fortresses on the frontiers, and in the hands of Hamet el Zegri had been the scourge of Andalusia. The good marques had another motive for his advice, becoming of a true and loyal knight. In the deep dungeons of Ronda languished several of his companions in arms, who had been captured in the defeat in the Axarquia. To break their chains, and restore them to liberty and light, he felt to be his peculiar duty, as one of those who had most promoted that disastrous enterprise.

King Ferdinand listened to the advice of the marques. He

knew the importance of Ronda, which was considered one of the keys to the kingdom of Granada; and he was disposed to punish the inhabitants, for the aid they had rendered to the garrison of Coin. The siege of Malaga, therefore, was abandoned for the present, and preparations made for a rapid and secret move against the city of Ronda.

CHAPTER XXX.

SIEGE OF RONDA.

THE bold Hamet el Zegri, the alcaide of Ronda, had returned sullenly to his strong-hold, after the surrender of Coin. He had fleshed his sword in battle with the Christians, but his thirst for vengeance was still unsatisfied. Hamet gloried in the strength of his fortress, and the valor of his people. A fierce and warlike populace was at his command; his signal-fires could summon all the warriors of the Serrania; his Gomeres almost subsisted on the spoils of Andalusia; and in the rock on which his fortress was built, were hopeless dungeons, filled with Christian captives, who had been carried off by these war-hawks of the mountains.

Ronda was considered as impregnable. It was situated in the heart of wild and rugged mountains, and perched upon an isolated rock, crested by a strong citadel, with triple walls and towers. A deep ravine, or rather a perpendicular chasm of the rocks, of frightful depth, surrounded three parts of the city; through this flowed the Rio Verde, or Green river. There were two suburbs to the city, fortified by walls and towers, and almost inaccessible, from the natural asperity of the rocks. Around this rugged city were deep rich valleys, sheltered by the mountains, refreshed by constant streams, abounding with grain and the most delicious fruits, and yielding verdant meadows, in which was reared a renowned breed of horses, the best in the whole kingdom for a foray.

Hamet el Zegri had scarcely returned to Ronda, when he received intelligence that the Christian army was marching to the siege of Malaga, and orders from El Zagal to send troops to his assistance. Hamet sent a part of his garrison for that purpose; in the mean time, he meditated an expedition to which

he was stimulated by pride and revenge. All Andalusia was now drained of its troops; there was an opportunity therefore for an inroad, by which he might wipe out the disgrace of his defeat at the battle of Lopera. Apprehending no danger to his mountain city, now that the storm of war had passed down into the vega of Malaga, he left but a remnant of his garrison to man its walls, and putting himself at the head of his band of Gomeres, swept down suddenly into the plains of Andalusia. He careered, almost without resistance, over those vast campiñas or pasture lands, which formed a part of the domains of the duke of Medina Sidonia. In vain the bells were rung, and the alarm-fires kindled—the band of Hamet had passed by, before any force could be assembled, and was only to be traced, like a hurricane, by the devastation it had made.

Hamet regained in safety the Serrania de Ronda, exulting in his successful inroad. The mountain glens were filled with long droves of cattle and flocks of sheep, from the campiñas of Medina Sidonia. There were mules, too, laden with the plunder of the villages; and every warrior had some costly spoil of jewels, for his favorite mistress.

As the Zegri drew near to Ronda, he was roused from his dream of triumph by the sound of heavy ordnance bellowing through the mountain defiles. His heart misgave him—he put spurs to his horse, and galloped in advance of his lagging cavalgada. As he proceeded, the noise of the ordnance increased, echoing from cliff to cliff. Spurring his horse up a craggy height which commanded an extensive view, he beheld, to his consternation, the country about Ronda white with the tents of a besieging army. The royal standard, displayed before a proud encampment, showed that Ferdinand himself was present; while the incessant blaze and thunder of artillery, and the volumes of overhanging smoke, told the work of destruction that was going on.

The royal army had succeeded in coming upon Ronda by surprise, during the absence of its alcaide and most of its garrison; but its inhabitants were warlike, and defended themselves bravely, trusting that Hamet and his Gomeres would soon return to their assistance.

The fancied strength of their bulwarks had been of little avail against the batteries of the besiegers. In the space of four days, three towers, and great masses of the walls which defended the suburbs, were battered down, and the suburbs taken and plundered. Lombards and other heavy ordnance

were now levelled at the walls of the city, and stones and missiles of all kinds hurled into the streets. The very rock on which the city stood shook with the thunder of the artillery; and the Christian captives, deep within its dungeons, hailed the sound as the promise of deliverance.

When Hamet el Zegri beheld his city thus surrounded and assailed, he called upon his men to follow him, and make a desperate attempt to cut their way through to its relief. They proceeded stealthily through the mountains, until they came to the nearest heights above the Christian camp. When night fell, and part of the army was sunk in sleep, they descended the rocks, and rushing suddenly upon the weakest part of the camp, endeavored to break their way through and gain the city. The camp was too strong to be forced; they were driven back to the crags of the mountains, from whence they defended themselves by showering down darts and stones upon their pursuers.

Hamet now lit alarm-fires above the heights: his standard was joined by the neighboring mountaineers, and by troops from Malaga. Thus reinforced, he made repeated assaults upon the Christians, cutting off all stragglers from the camp. All his attempts, however, to force his way into the city, were fruitless; many of his bravest men were slain, and he was obliged to retreat into the fastnesses of the mountains.

In the meanwhile, the distress of Ronda was hourly increasing. The marques of Cadiz, having possession of the suburbs, was enabled to approach to the very foot of the perpendicular precipice rising from the river, on the summit of which the city is built. At the foot of this rock is a living fountain of limpid water, gushing into a great natural basin. A secret mine led down from within the city to this fountain by several hundred steps cut in the solid rock. From hence the city obtained its chief supply of water; and these steps were deeply worn by the weary feet of Christian captives, employed in this painful labor. The marques of Cadiz discovered this subterranean passage, and directed his pioneers to countermine in the side of the rock: they pierced to the shaft, and, stopping it up, deprived the city of the benefit of this precious fountain.

While the brave marques of Cadiz was thus pressing the siege with zeal, and glowing with the generous thoughts of soon delivering his companions in arms from the Moorish dungeons, far other were the feelings of the alcayde Hamet el

Zegri. He smote his breast and gnashed his teeth in impotent fury, as he beheld from the mountain cliffs the destruction of the city. Every thunder of the Christian ordnance seemed to batter against his heart. He saw tower after tower tumbling by day, and at night the city blazed like a volcano. "They fired not merely stones from their ordnance," says a chronicler of the times, "but likewise great balls of iron, cast in moulds, which demolished every thing they struck." They threw also balls of tow, steeped in pitch and oil and gunpowder, which, when once on fire, were not to be extinguished, and which set the houses in flames. Great was the horror of the inhabitants: they knew not where to fly for refuge: their houses were in a blaze, or shattered by the ordnance; the streets were perilous from the falling ruins and the bounding balls, which dashed to pieces every thing they encountered. At night, the city looked like a fiery furnace; the cries and wailings of the women were heard between the thunders of the ordnance, and reached even to the Moors on the opposite mountains, who answered them by yells of fury and despair.

All hope of external succor being at an end, the inhabitants of Ronda were compelled to capitulate. Ferdinand was easily prevailed upon to grant them favorable terms. The place was capable of longer resistance; and he feared for the safety of his camp, as the forces were daily augmenting on the mountains, and making frequent assaults. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with their effects, either to Barbary or elsewhere; and those who chose to reside in Spain, had lands assigned them, and were indulged in the practice of their religion.

No sooner did the place surrender, than detachments were sent to attack the Moors who hovered about the neighboring mountains. Hamet el Zegri, however, did not remain to make a fruitless battle. He gave up the game as lost, and retreated with his Gomeres, filled with grief and rage, but trusting to fortune to give him future vengeance.

The first care of the good marques of Cadiz, on entering Ronda, was to deliver his unfortunate companions in arms from the dungeons of the fortress. What a difference in their looks from the time when, flushed with health and hope, and arrayed in military pomp, they had sallied forth upon the mountain foray! Many of them were almost naked, with irons at their ankles, and beards reaching to their waists. Their meeting with the marques was joyful; yet it had the

look of grief, for their joy was mingled with many bitter recollections. There was an immense number of other captives, among whom were several young men of noble families, who, with filial piety, had surrendered themselves prisoners in place of their fathers.

The captives were all provided with mules, and sent to the queen at Cordova. The humane heart of Isabella melted at the sight of the piteous cavalcade. They were all supplied by her with food and raiment, and money to pay their expenses to their homes. Their chains were hung as pious trophies against the exterior of the church of St. Juan de los Reyes, in Toledo, where the Christian traveller may regale his eyes with the sight of them at this very day.

Among the Moorish captives was a young infidel maiden, of great beauty, who desired to become a Christian and to remain in Spain. She had been inspired with the light of the true faith, through the ministry of a young man who had been a captive in Ronda. He was anxious to complete his good work by marrying her. The queen consented to their pious wishes, having first taken care that the young maiden should be properly purified by the holy sacrament of baptism.

“Thus this pestilent nest of warfare and infidelity, the city of Ronda,” says the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, “was converted to the true faith by the thunder of our artillery—an example which was soon followed by Casanbonela, Alarbella, and other towns in these parts, insomuch that in the course of this expedition no less than seventy-two places were rescued from the vile sect of Mahomet, and placed under the benignant domination of the cross.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW THE PEOPLE OF GRANADA INVITED EL ZAGAL TO THE THRONE, AND HOW HE MARCHED TO THE CAPITAL.

THE people of Granada were a versatile, unsteady race, and exceedingly given to make and unmake kings. They had, for a long time, vacillated between old Muley Aben Hassan and his son Boabdil el Chico, sometimes setting up the one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both at once, according to the pitch and pressure of external evils. They found, however,

that the evils still went on increasing, in defiance of every change, and were at their wits' end to devise some new combination or arrangement, by which an efficient government might be wrought out of two bad kings. When the tidings arrived of the fall of Ronda, and the consequent ruin of the frontier, a tumultuous assemblage took place in one of the public squares. As usual, the people attributed the misfortunes of the country to the faults of their rulers; for the populace never imagine that any part of their miseries can originate with themselves. A crafty alfaqui, named Alyme Mazer, who had watched the current of their discontents, rose and harangued them: "You have been choosing and changing," said he, "between two monarchs—and who and what are they? Muley Aben Hassan, for one; a man worn out by age and infirmities, unable to sally forth against the foe, even when ravaging to the very gates of the city:—and Boabdil el Chico, for the other; an apostate, a traitor, a deserter from his throne, a fugitive among the enemies of his nation, a man fated to misfortune, and proverbially named 'the unlucky.' In a time of overwhelming war, like the present, he only is fit to sway a sceptre who can wield a sword. Would you seek such a man? You need not look far. Allah has sent such a one, in this time of distress, to retrieve the fortunes of Granada. You already know whom I mean. You know that it can be no other than your general, the invincible Abdallah, whose surname of El Zagal has become a watch-word in battle, rousing the courage of the faithful, and striking terror into the unbelievers."

The multitude received the words of the alfaqui with acclamations; they were delighted with the idea of a third king over Granada; and Abdalla el Zagal being of the royal family, and already in the virtual exercise of royal power, the measure had nothing in it that appeared either rash or violent. A deputation was therefore sent to El Zagal at Malaga, inviting him to repair to Granada to receive the crown.

El Zagal expressed great surprise and repugnance, when the mission was announced to him; and nothing but his patriotic zeal for the public safety, and his fraternal eagerness to relieve the aged Aben Hassan from the cares of government, prevailed upon him to accept the offer. Leaving, therefore, Rodovan Vanegas, one of the bravest Moorish generals, in command of Malaga, he departed for Granada, attended by three hundred trusty cavaliers.

Old Muley Aben Hassan did not wait for the arrival of his brother. Unable any longer to buffet with the storms of the times, his only solicitude was to seek some safe and quiet harbor of repose. In one of the deep valleys which indent the Mediterranean coast, and which are shut up on the land side by stupendous mountains, stood the little city of Almunecar. The valley was watered by the limpid river Frio, and abounded with fruits, with grain and pasturage. The city was strongly fortified, and the garrison and alcayde were devoted to the old monarch. This was the place chosen by Muley Aben Hassan for his asylum. His first care was to send thither all his treasures; his next care was to take refuge there himself; his third, that his sultana Zorayna, and their two sons, should follow him.

In the mean time, Muley Abdallah el Zagal pursued his journey towards the capital, attended by his three hundred cavaliers. The road from Malaga to Granada winds close by Alhama, and is dominated by that lofty fortress. This had been a most perilous pass for the Moors, during the time that Alhama was commanded by the count de Tendilla: not a traveller could escape his eagle eye, and his garrison was ever ready for a sally. The count de Tendilla, however, had been relieved from this arduous post, and it had been given in charge to Don Gutiere de Padilla, claverio, or treasurer of the order of Calatrava; an easy, indulgent man, who had with him three hundred gallant knights of his order, besides other mercenary troops. The garrison had fallen off in discipline; the cavaliers were hardy in fight and daring in foray, but confident in themselves and negligent of proper precautions. Just before the journey of El Zagal, a number of these cavaliers, with several soldiers of fortune of the garrison, in all about one hundred and seventy men, had sallied forth to harass the Moorish country during its present distracted state, and, having ravaged the valleys of the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountains, were returning to Alhama in gay spirits and laden with booty.

As El Zagal passed through the neighborhood of Alhama, he recollected the ancient perils of the road, and sent light cerradors in advance, to inspect each rock and ravine where a foe might lurk in ambush. One of these scouts, overlooking a narrow valley which opened upon the road, descried a troop of horsemen on the banks of a little stream. They were dismounted, and had taken the bridles from their steeds, that

they might crop the fresh grass on the banks of the river. The horsemen were scattered about, some reposing in the shades of rocks and trees, others gambling for the spoil they had taken: not a sentinel was posted to keep guard; every thing showed the perfect security of men who consider themselves beyond the reach of danger.

These careless cavaliers were in fact the knights of Calatrava, with a part of their companions in arms, returning from their foray. A part of their force had passed on with the cavalgada; ninety of the principal cavaliers had halted to refresh themselves in this valley. El Zagal smiled with ferocious joy, when he heard of their negligent security. "Here will be trophies," said he, "to grace our entrance into Granada."

Approaching the valley with cautious silence, he wheeled into it at full speed at the head of his troop, and attacked the Christians so suddenly and furiously, that they had not time to put the bridles upon their horses, or even to leap into the saddles. They made a confused but valiant defence, fighting among the rocks, and in the rugged bed of the river. Their defence was useless; seventy-nine were slain, and the remaining eleven were taken prisoners.

A party of the Moors galloped in pursuit of the cavalgada: they soon overtook it, winding slowly up a hill. The horsemen who convoyed it, perceiving the enemy at a distance, made their escape, and left the spoil to be retaken by the Moors. El Zagal gathered together his captives and his booty, and proceeded, elate with success, to Granada.

He paused before the gate of Elvira, for as yet he had not been proclaimed king. This ceremony was immediately performed; for the fame of his recent exploit had preceded him, and had intoxicated the minds of the giddy populace. He entered Granada in a sort of triumph. The eleven captive knights of Calatrava walked in front: next were paraded the ninety captured steeds, bearing the armor and weapons of their late owners, and led by as many mounted Moors: then came seventy Moorish horsemen, with as many Christian heads hanging at their saddle-bows: Muley Abdallah el Zagal followed, surrounded by a number of distinguished cavaliers splendidly attired; and the pageant was closed by a long cavalgada of the flocks and herds, and other booty, recovered from the Christians.*

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 62. Mariana, Hist. de España. Abarca, Anales de Aragon.

The populace gazed with almost savage triumph at these captive cavaliers and the gory heads of their companions, knowing them to have been part of the formidable garrison of Alhama, so long the scourge of Granada and the terror of the vega. They hailed this petty triumph as an auspicious opening of the reign of their new monarch; for several days, the names of Muley Aben Hassan and Boabdil el Chico were never mentioned but with contempt, and the whole city resounded with the praises of El Zagal, or the valiant.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HOW THE COUNT DE CABRA ATTEMPTED TO CAPTURE ANOTHER KING, AND HOW HE FARED IN HIS ATTEMPT.

THE elevation of a bold and active veteran to the throne of Granada, in place of its late bedridden king, made an important difference in the aspect of the war, and called for some blow that should dash the confidence of the Moors in their new monarch, and animate the Christians to fresh exertions.

Don Diego de Cordova, the brave count de Cabra, was at this time in his castle of Vaena, where he kept a wary eye upon the frontier. It was now the latter part of August, and he grieved that the summer should pass away without an inroad into the country of the foe. He sent out his scouts on the prowl, and they brought him word that the important post of Moclin was but weakly garrisoned. This was a castellated town, strongly situated upon a high mountain, partly surrounded by thick forests, and partly girdled by a river. It defended one of the rugged and solitary passes, by which the Christians were wont to make their inroads; insomuch that the Moors, in their figurative way, denominated it the shield of Granada.

The count de Cabra sent word to the monarchs of the feeble state of the garrison, and gave it as his opinion, that, by a secret and rapid expedition, the place might be surprised. King Ferdinand asked the advice of his counsellors. Some cautioned him against the sanguine temperament of the count, and his heedlessness of danger; Moclin, they observed, was near to Granada, and might be promptly reinforced. The opinion of the count, however, prevailed; the king considering

him almost infallible, in matters of border warfare, since his capture of Boabdil el Chico.

The king departed, therefore, from Cordova, and took post at Alcala la Real, for the purpose of being near to Moclin. The queen, also, proceeded to Vaena, accompanied by her children, prince Juan and the princess Isabella, and her great counsellor in all matters, public and private, spiritual and temporal, the venerable grand cardinal of Spain.

Nothing could exceed the pride and satisfaction of the loyal count de Cabra, when he saw this stately train winding along the dreary mountain roads, and entering the gates of Vaena. He received his royal guests with all due ceremony, and lodged them in the best apartments that the warrior castle afforded, being the same that had formerly been occupied by the royal captive Boabdil.

King Ferdinand had concerted a wary plan, to insure the success of the enterprise. The count de Cabra and Don Martin Alonzo de Montemayor were to set forth with their troops, so as to reach Moclin by a certain hour, and to intercept all who should attempt to enter, or should sally from the town. The Master of Calatrava, the troops of the grand cardinal, commanded by the count of Buendia, and the forces of the bishop of Jaen, led by that belligerent prelate, amounting in all to four thousand horse and six thousand foot, were to set off in time to co-operate with the count de Cabra, so as to surround the town. The king was to follow with his whole force, and encamp before the place.

And here the worthy padre Fray Antonio Agapida breaks forth into a triumphant eulogy of the pious prelates, who thus mingled personally in these scenes of warfare. As this was a holy crusade (says he) undertaken for the advancement of the faith and the glory of the church, so was it always countenanced and upheld by saintly men: for the victories of their most Catholic majesties were not followed, like those of mere worldly sovereigns, by erecting castles and towers, and appointing alcaides and garrisons; but by the founding of convents and cathedrals, and the establishment of wealthy bishoprics. Wherefore their majesties were always surrounded, in court or camp, in the cabinet or in the field, by a crowd of ghostly advisers, inspiring them to the prosecution of this most righteous war. Nay, the holy men of the church did not scruple, at times, to buckle on the cuirass over the cassock, to exchange the crosier for the lance, and thus, with corporal

hands and temporal weapons, to fight the good fight of the faith.

But to return from this rhapsody of the worthy friar. The count de Cabra, being instructed in the complicated arrangements of the king, marched forth at midnight to execute them punctually. He led his troops by the little river that winds below Vaena, and so up the wild defiles of the mountains, marching all night, and stopping only in the heat of the following day, to repose under the shadowy cliffs of a deep barranca, calculating to arrive at Moclin exactly in time to co-operate with the other forces.

The troops had scarcely stretched themselves on the earth to take repose, when a scout arrived, bringing word that El Zagal had suddenly sallied out of Granada with a strong force, and had encamped in the vicinity of Moclin. It was plain that the wary Moor had received information of the intended attack. This, however, was not the idea that presented itself to the mind of the count de Cabra. He had captured one king—here was a fair opportunity to secure another. What a triumph, to lodge another captive monarch in his castle of Vaena!—what a prisoner to deliver into the hands of his royal mistress! Fired with the thoughts, the good count forgot all the arrangements of the king; or rather, blinded by former success, he trusted every thing to courage and fortune, and thought that, by one bold swoop, he might again bear off the royal prize, and wear his laurels without competition.* His only fear was that the Master of Calatrava, and the belligerent bishop, might come up in time to share the glory of the victory; so, ordering every one to horse, this hot-spirited cavalier pushed on for Moclin, without allowing his troops the necessary time for repose.

The evening closed, as the count arrived in the neighborhood of Moclin. It was the full of the moon, and a bright and cloudless night. The count was marching through one of those deep valleys or ravines, worn in the Spanish mountains by the brief but tremendous torrents which prevail during the autumnal rains. It was walled on each side by lofty and almost perpendicular cliffs, but great masses of moonlight were thrown into the bottom of the glen, glittering on the armor of the shining squadrons, as they silently passed through it. Suddenly the war-cry of the Moors rose in various parts

* Mariana, lib. 25, c. 17. Abarca, Zurita, &c.

of the valley; "El Zagal! El Zagal!" was shouted from every cliff, accompanied by showers of missiles, that struck down several of the Christian warriors. The count lifted up his eyes, and beheld, by the light of the moon, every cliff glistening with Moorish soldiery. The deadly shower fell thickly round him, and the shining armor of his followers made them fair objects for the aim of the enemy. The count saw his brother Gonzalo struck dead by his side; his own horse sunk under him, pierced by four Moorish lances; and he received a wound in the hand from an arquebuss. He remembered the horrible massacre of the mountains of Malaga, and feared a similar catastrophe. There was no time to pause. His brother's horse, freed from his slaughtered rider, was running at large; seizing the reins, he sprang into the saddle, called upon his men to follow him, and, wheeling round, retreated out of the fatal valley.

The Moors, rushing down from the heights, pursued the retreating Christians. The chase endured for a league, but it was a league of rough and broken road, where the Christians had to turn and fight at almost every step. In these short but fierce combats, the enemy lost many cavaliers of note; but the loss of the Christians was infinitely more grievous, comprising numbers of the noblest warriors of Vaena and its vicinity. Many of the Christians, disabled by wounds or exhausted by fatigue, turned aside and endeavored to conceal themselves among rocks and thickets, but never more rejoined their companions, being slain or captured by the Moors, or perishing in their wretched retreats.

The arrival of the troops led by the Master of Calatrava and the bishop of Jaen, put an end to the rout. El Zagal contented himself with the laurels he had gained, and, ordering the trumpets to call off his men from the pursuit, returned in great triumph to Moclin.*

Queen Isabella was at Vaena, awaiting with great anxiety the result of the expedition. She was in a stately apartment of the castle, looking towards the road that winds through the mountains from Moclin, and regarding the watch-towers that crowned the neighboring heights, in hopes of favorable signals. The prince and princess, her children, were with her, and her venerable counsellor, the grand cardinal. All shared in the anxiety of the moment. At length couriers were seen riding

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 4. Pulgar, Cronica.

towards the town. They entered its gates, but before they reached the castle, the nature of their tidings was known to the queen, by the shrieks and wailings that rose from the streets below. The messengers were soon followed by wounded fugitives, hastening home to be relieved, or to die among their friends and families. The whole town resounded with lamentations; for it had lost the flower of its youth, and its bravest warriors. Isabella was a woman of courageous soul, but her feelings were overpowered by the spectacle of woe which presented itself on every side; her maternal heart mourned over the death of so many loyal subjects, who so shortly before had rallied round her with devoted affection; and, losing her usual self-command, she sunk into deep despondency.

In this gloomy state of mind, a thousand apprehensions crowded upon her. She dreaded the confidence which this success would impart to the Moors; she feared also for the important fortress of Alhama, the garrison of which had not been reinforced since its foraging party had been cut off by this same El Zagel. On every side the queen saw danger and disaster, and feared that a general reverse was about to attend the Castilian arms.

The grand cardinal comforted her with both spiritual and worldly counsel. He told her to recollect that no country was ever conquered without occasional reverses to the conquerors; that the Moors were a warlike people, fortified in a rough and mountainous country, where they never could be conquered by her ancestors,—and that in fact her armies had already, in three years, taken more cities than those of any of her predecessors had been able to do in twelve. He concluded by offering himself to take the field, with three thousand cavalry, his own retainers, paid and maintained by himself, and either hasten to the relief of Alhama, or undertake any other expedition her majesty might command. The discreet words of the cardinal soothed the spirit of the queen, who always looked to him for consolation; and she soon recovered her usual equanimity.

Some of the counsellors of Isabella, of that politic class who seek to rise by the faults of others, were loud in their censures of the rashness of the count. The queen defended him, with prompt generosity. “The enterprise,” said she, “was rash, but not more rash than that of Lucena, which was crowned with success, and which we have all applauded as the height of heroism. Had the count de Cabra succeeded in capturing

the uncle, as he did the nephew, who is there that would not have praised him to the skies?"

The magnanimous words of the queen put a stop to all invidious remarks in her presence; but certain of the courtiers, who had envied the count the glory gained by his former achievements, continued to magnify, among themselves, his present imprudence, and we are told by Fray Antonio Agapida, that they sneeringly gave the worthy cavalier the appellation of count de Cabra, the king-catcher.

Ferdinand had reached the place on the frontier called the Fountain of the King, within three leagues of Moclin, when he heard of the late disaster. He greatly lamented the precipitation of the count, but forbore to express himself with severity, for he knew the value of that loyal and valiant cavalier.* He held a council of war, to determine what course was to be pursued. Some of his cavaliers advised him to abandon the attempt upon Moclin, the place being strongly reinforced, and the enemy inspirited by his recent victory. Certain old Spanish hidalgos reminded him that he had but few Castilian troops in his army, without which staunch soldiery his predecessors never presumed to enter the Moorish territory; while others remonstrated that it would be beneath the dignity of a king to retire from an enterprise, on account of the defeat of a single cavalier and his retainers. In this way the king was distracted by a multitude of counsellors, when fortunately a letter from the queen put an end to his perplexities. Proceed we, in the next chapter, to relate what was the purport of that letter.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

EXPEDITION AGAINST THE CASTLES OF CAMBIL AND ALBAHAR.

"HAPPY are those princes," exclaims the worthy padre Fray Antonio Agapida, "who have women and priests to advise them, for in these dwelleth the spirit of counsel." While Ferdinand and his captains were confounding each other in their deliberations at the Fountain of the King, a quiet but deep little council of war was held in the state apartment of

* Abarca; *Anales de Aragon*.

the old castle of Vaena, between queen Isabella, the venerable Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, grand cardinal of Spain, and Don Garcia Osorio, the belligerent bishop of Jaen. This last worthy prelate, who had exchanged his mitre for a helm, no sooner beheld the defeat of the enterprise against Moclin, than he turned the reins of his sleek, stall-fed steed, and hastened back to Vaena, full of a project for the employment of the army, the advancement of the faith, and the benefit of his own diocese. He knew that the actions of the king were influenced by the opinions of the queen, and that the queen always inclined a listening ear to the counsels of saintly men: he laid his plans, therefore, with the customary wisdom of his cloth, to turn the ideas of the queen into the proper channel; and this was the purport of the worthy bishop's suggestions.

The bishopric of Jaen had for a long time been harassed by two Moorish castles, the scourge and terror of all that part of the country. They were situated on the frontiers of the kingdom of Granada, about four leagues from Jaen, in a deep, narrow, and rugged valley, surrounded by lofty mountains. Through this valley runs the Rio Frio, (or Cold river,) in a deep channel, worn between high precipitous banks. On each side of the stream rise two vast rocks, nearly perpendicular, within a stone's-throw of each other; blocking up the gorge of the valley. On the summits of these rocks stood the two formidable castles, Cambil and Albahar, fortified with battlements and towers of great height and thickness. They were connected together by a bridge thrown from rock to rock across the river. The road, which passed through the valley, traversed this bridge, and was completely commanded by these castles. They stood like two giants of romance, guarding the pass, and dominating the valley.

The kings of Granada, knowing the importance of these castles, kept them always well garrisoned, and victualled to stand a siege, with fleet steeds and hard riders, to forage the country of the Christians. The warlike race of the Abencerrages, the troops of the royal household, and others of the choicest chivalry of Granada, made them their strong-holds, or posts of arms, from whence to sally forth on those predatory and roving enterprises which were the delight of the Moorish cavaliers. As the wealthy bishopric of Jaen lay immediately at hand, it suffered more peculiarly from these marauders. They drove off the fat beeves and the flocks of sheep from the pastures, and swept

the laborers from the field; they scoured the country to the very gates of Jaen, so that the citizens could not venture from their walls, without the risk of being borne off captive to the dungeons of these castles.

The worthy bishop, like a good pastor, beheld with grief of heart his fat bishopric daily waxing leaner and leaner, and poorer and poorer; and his holy ire was kindled at the thoughts that the possessions of the church should thus be at the mercy of a crew of infidels. It was the urgent counsel of the bishop, therefore, that the military force, thus providentially assembled in the neighborhood, since it was apparently foiled in its attempt upon Moclin, should be turned against these insolent castles, and the country delivered from their domination. The grand cardinal supported the suggestion of the bishop, and declared that he had long meditated the policy of a measure of the kind. Their united opinions found favor with the queen, and she dispatched a letter on the subject to the king. It came just in time to relieve him from the distraction of a multitude of counsellors, and he immediately undertook the reduction of those castles.

The marques of Cadiz was accordingly sent in advance, with two thousand horse, to keep a watch upon the garrisons, and prevent all entrance or exit, until the king should arrive with the main army and the battering artillery. The queen, to be near at hand in case of need, moved her quarters to the city of Jaen, where she was received with martial honors by the belligerent bishop, who had buckled on his cuirass and girded on his sword, to fight in the cause of his diocese.

In the mean time, the marques of Cadiz arrived in the valley, and completely shut up the Moors within their walls. The castles were under the command of Mahomet Lentin Ben Usef, an Abencerrage, and one of the bravest cavaliers of Granada. In his garrisons were many troops of the fierce African tribe of Gomerres. Mahomet Lentin, confident in the strength of his fortresses, smiled as he looked down from his battlements upon the Christian cavalry, perplexed in the rough and narrow valley. He sent forth skirmishing parties to harass them, and there were many sharp combats between small parties and single knights; but the Moors were driven back to their castles, and all attempts to send intelligence of their situation to Granada, were frustrated by the vigilance of the marques of Cadiz.

At length the legions of the royal army came pouring, with vaunting trumpet and fluttering banner, along the defiles of the mountains. They halted before the castles, but the king could not find room in the narrow and rugged valley to form his camp: he had to divide it into three parts, which were posted on different heights; and his tents whitened the sides of the neighboring hills. When the encampment was formed, the army remained gazing idly at the castles. The artillery was upwards of four leagues in the rear, and without artillery all attack would be in vain.

The alcaide Mahomet Lentin knew the nature of the road by which the artillery had to be brought. It was merely a narrow and rugged path, at times scaling almost perpendicular crags and precipices, up which it was utterly impossible for wheel carriages to pass; neither was it in the power of man or beast to draw up the lombards, and other ponderous ordnance. He felt assured, therefore, that they never could be brought to the camp; and, without their aid, what could the Christians effect against his rock-built castles? He scoffed at them, therefore, as he saw their tents by day and their fires by night covering the surrounding heights. "Let them linger here a little while longer," said he, "and the autumnal torrents will wash them from the mountains."

While the alcaide was thus closely mewed up within his walls, and the Christians remained inactive in their camp, he noticed, one calm autumnal day, the sound of implements of labor echoing among the mountains, and now and then the crash of a falling tree, or a thundering report, as if some rock had been heaved from its bed and hurled into the valley. The alcaide was on the battlements of his castle, surrounded by his knights. "Methinks," said he, "these Christians are making war upon the rocks and trees of the mountains, since they find our castles unassailable."

The sounds did not cease even during the night: every now and then, the Moorish sentinel, as he paced the battlements, heard some crash echoing among the heights. The return of day explained the mystery. Scarcely did the sun shine against the summits of the mountains, than shouts burst from the cliffs opposite to the castles, and were answered from the camp, with joyful sound of kettle-drums and trumpets.

The astonished Moors lifted up their eyes, and beheld, as it were, a torrent of war breaking out of a narrow defile. There was a multitude of men, with pickaxes, spades, and bars of

iron, clearing away every obstacle; while behind them slowly moved along great teams of oxen, dragging heavy ordnance, and all the munitions of battering artillery.

"What cannot women and priests effect, when they unite in council?" exclaims again the worthy Antonio Agapida. The queen had held another consultation with the grand cardinal and the belligerent bishop of Jaen. It was clear that the heavy ordnance could never be conveyed to the camp by the regular road of the country; and without battering artillery, nothing could be effected. It was suggested, however, by the zealous bishop, that another road might be opened, through a more practicable part of the mountains. It would be an undertaking extravagant and chimerical, with ordinary means; and, therefore, unlooked for by the enemy; but what could not kings effect, who had treasures and armies at command?

The project struck the enterprising spirit of the queen. Six thousand men, with pickaxes, crowbars, and every other necessary implement, were set to work day and night, to break a road through the very centre of the mountains. No time was to be lost, for it was rumored that El Zagal was about to march with a mighty host to the relief of the castles. The bustling bishop of Jaen acted as pioneer, to mark the route and superintend the laborers; and the grand cardinal took care that the work should never languish through lack of means.*

"When kings' treasures," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "are dispensed by priestly hands, there is no stint, as the glorious annals of Spain bear witness." Under the guidance of these ghostly men, it seemed as if miracles were effected. Almost an entire mountain was levelled, valleys filled up, trees hewn down, rocks broken and overturned; in short, all the obstacles which nature had heaped around, entirely and promptly vanished. In little more than twelve days, this gigantic work was effected, and the ordnance dragged to the camp, to the great triumph of the Christians and confusion of the Moors.†

No sooner was the heavy artillery arrived, than it was mounted, in all haste, upon the neighboring heights; Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, the first engineer in Spain, superintended the batteries, and soon opened a destructive fire upon the castles.

When the valiant alcaide, Mahomet Lentin, found his

* Zurita, *Anales de Aragon*, lib. 20, c. 61. Pulgar, part 3, cap. 51.

† Idem.

towers tumbling about him, and his bravest men dashed from the walls, without the power of inflicting a wound upon the foe, his haughty spirit was greatly exasperated. "Of what avail," said he, bitterly, "is all the prowess of knighthood against these cowardly engines, that murder from afar?"

For a whole day, a tremendous fire kept thundering upon the castle of Albahar. The lombards discharged large stones, which demolished two of the towers, and all the battlements which guarded the portal. If any Moors attempted to defend the walls or repair the breaches, they were shot down by ribadoquines, and other small pieces of artillery. The Christian soldiery issued forth from the camp, under cover of this fire; and, approaching the castles, discharged flights of arrows and stones through the openings made by the ordnance.

At length, to bring the siege to a conclusion, Francisco Ramirez elevated some of the heaviest artillery on a mount that rose in form of a cone or pyramid, on the side of the river near to Albahar, and commanded both castles. This was an operation of great skill and excessive labor, but it was repaid by complete success; for the Moors did not dare to wait until this terrible battery should discharge its fury. Satisfied that all further resistance was vain, the valiant alcaide made signal for a parley. The articles of capitulation were soon arranged. The alcaide and his garrisons were permitted to return in safety to the city of Granada, and the castles were delivered into the possession of king Ferdinand, on the day of the festival of St. Matthew, in the month of September. They were immediately repaired, strongly garrisoned, and delivered in charge to the city of Jaen.

The effects of this triumph were immediately apparent. Quiet and security once more settled upon the bishopric. The husbandmen tilled their fields in peace, the herds and flocks fattened unmolested in the pastures, and the vineyards yielded corpulent skinsful of rosy wine. The good bishop enjoyed, in the gratitude of his people, the approbation of his conscience, the increase of his revenues, and the abundance of his table, a reward for all his toils and perils. "This glorious victory," exclaims Fray Antonio Agapida, "achieved by such extraordinary management and infinite labor, is a shining example of what a bishop can effect, for the promotion of the faith and the good of his diocese."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ENTERPRISE OF THE KNIGHTS OF CALATRAVA AGAINST ZALEA.

WHILE these events were taking place on the northern frontier of the kingdom of Granada, the important fortress of Alhama was neglected, and its commander, Don Gutiere de Padilla, clavero of Calatrava, reduced to great perplexity. The remnant of the foraging party, which had been surprised and massacred by the fierce El Zagal when on his way to Granada to receive the crown, had returned in confusion and dismay to the fortress. They could only speak of their own disgrace, being obliged to abandon their cavalgada, and to fly, pursued by a superior force: of the flower of their party, the gallant knights of Calatrava, who had remained behind in the valley, they knew nothing. A few days cleared up all the mystery of their fate: tidings were brought that their bloody heads had been borne in triumph into Granada by the ferocious El Zagal. The surviving knights of Calatrava, who formed a part of the garrison, burned to revenge the death of their comrades, and to wipe out the stigma of this defeat; but the clavero had been rendered cautious by disaster,—he resisted all their entreaties for a foray. His garrison was weakened by the loss of so many of its bravest men; the vega was patrolled by numerous and powerful squadrons, sent forth by the warlike El Zagal; above all, the movements of the garrison were watched by the warriors of Zalea, a strong town, only two leagues distant, on the road towards Loxa. This place was a continual check upon Alhama when in its most powerful state, placing ambuscades to entrap the Christian cavaliers in the course of their sallies. Frequent and bloody skirmishes had taken place, in consequence; and the troops of Alhama, when returning from their forays, had often to fight their way back through the squadrons of Zalea. Thus surrounded by dangers, Don Gutiere de Padilla restrained the eagerness of his troops for a sally, knowing that any additional disaster might be followed by the loss of Alhama.

In the meanwhile, provisions began to grow scarce; they were unable to forage the country as usual for supplies, and depended for relief upon the Castilian sovereigns. The defeat

of the count de Cabra filled the measure of their perplexities, as it interrupted the intended reinforcements and supplies. To such extremity were they reduced, that they were compelled to kill some of their horses for provisions.

The worthy clavero, Don Gutiere de Padilla, was pondering one day on this gloomy state of affairs, when a Moor was brought before him who had surrendered himself at the gate of Alhama, and claimed an audience. Don Gutiere was accustomed to visits of the kind from renegado Moors, who roamed the country as spies and adalides; but the countenance of this man was quite unknown to him. He had a box strapped to his shoulders, containing divers articles of traffic, and appeared to be one of those itinerant traders, who often resorted to Alhama and the other garrison towns, under pretext of vending trivial merchandise, such as amulets, perfumes, and trinkets, but who often produced rich shawls, golden chains and necklaces, and valuable gems and jewels.

The Moor requested a private conference with the clavero: "I have a precious jewel," said he, "to dispose of."

"I want no jewels," replied Don Gutiere.

"For the sake of him who died on the cross, the great prophet of your faith," said the Moor, solemnly, "refuse not my request; the jewel I speak of you alone can purchase, but I can only treat about it in secret."

Don Gutiere perceived there was something hidden under these mystic and figurative terms, in which the Moors were often accustomed to talk. He motioned to his attendants to retire. When they were alone, the Moor looked cautiously round the apartment, and then, approaching close to the knight, demanded in a low voice, "What will you give me if I deliver the fortress of Zalea into your hands?"

Don Gutiere looked with surprise at the humble individual that made such a suggestion.

"What means have you," said he, "of effecting such a proposition?"

"I have a brother in the garrison of Zalea," replied the Moor, "who, for a proper compensation, would admit a body of troops into the citadel."

Don Gutiere turned a scrutinizing eye upon the Moor. "What right have I to believe," said he, "that thou wilt be truer to me, than to those of thy blood and thy religion?"

"I renounce all ties to them, either of blood or religion," replied the Moor; "my mother was a Christian captive; her

country shall henceforth be my country, and her faith my faith." *

The doubts of Don Gutiere were not dispelled by this profession of mongrel Christianity. "Granting the sincerity of thy conversion," said he, "art thou under no obligations of gratitude or duty to the alcaide of the fortress thou wouldst betray?"

The eyes of the Moor flashed fire at the words; he gnashed his teeth with fury. "The alcaide," cried he, "is a dog! He has deprived my brother of his just share of booty; he has robbed me of my merchandise, treated me worse than a Jew when I murmured at his injustice, and ordered me to be thrust forth ignominiously from his walls. May the curse of God fall upon my head, if I rest content until I have full revenge!"

"Enough," said Don Gutiere: "I trust more to thy revenge than thy religion."

The good clavero called a council of his officers. The knights of Calatrava were unanimous for the enterprise—zealous to appease the manes of their slaughtered comrades. Don Gutiere reminded them of the state of the garrison, enfeebled by their late loss, and scarcely sufficient for the defence of the walls. The cavaliers replied that there was no achievement without risk, and that there would have been no great actions recorded in history, had there not been daring spirits ready to peril life to gain renown.

Don Gutiere yielded to the wishes of his knights, for to have resisted any further might have drawn on him the imputation of timidity: he ascertained by trusty spies that every thing in Zalea remained in the usual state, and he made all the requisite arrangements for the attack.

When the appointed night arrived, all the cavaliers were anxious to engage in the enterprise; but the individuals were decided by lot. They set out, under the guidance of the Moor; and when they arrived in the vicinity of Zalea, they bound his hands behind his back, and their leader pledged his knightly word to strike him dead on the first sign of treachery. He then bade him to lead the way.

It was near midnight, when they reached the walls of the fortress. They passed silently along until they found themselves below the citadel. Here their guide made a low and preconcerted signal: it was answered from above, and a cord

* Cura de los Palacios.

let down from the wall. The knights attached to it a ladder, which was drawn up and fastened. Gutiere Muñoz was the first that mounted, followed by Pedro de Alvanado, both brave and hardy soldiers. A handful succeeded; they were attacked by a party of guards, but held them at bay until more of their comrades ascended; with their assistance, they gained possession of a tower and part of the wall. The garrison, by this time, was aroused; but before they could reach the scene of action, most of the cavaliers were within the battlements. A bloody contest raged for about an hour—several of the Christians were slain, but many of the Moors; at length the whole citadel was carried, and the town submitted without resistance.

Thus did the gallant knights of Calatrava gain the strong town of Zalea with scarcely any loss, and atone for the inglorious defeat of their companions by El Zagal. They found the magazines of the place well stored with provisions, and were enabled to carry a seasonable supply to their own famishing garrison.

The tidings of this event reached the sovereigns, just after the surrender of Cambil and Albahar. They were greatly rejoiced at this additional success of their arms, and immediately sent strong reinforcements and ample supplies for both Alhama and Zalea. They then dismissed the army for the winter. Ferdinand and Isabella retired to Alcala de Henares, where the queen, on the 16th of December, 1485, gave birth to the princess Catharine, afterwards wife of Henry VIII. of England. Thus prosperously terminated the checkered campaign of this important year.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEATH OF MULEY ABEN HASSAN.

MULEY ABDALLAH EL ZAGAL had been received with great acclamations at Granada, on his return from defeating the count de Cabra. He had endeavored to turn his victory to the greatest advantage, with his subjects; giving tilts and tournaments, and other public festivities, in which the Moors delighted. The loss of the castles of Cambil and Albahar, and of the fortress of Zalea, however, checked this sudden tide of

popularity; and some of the fickle populace began to doubt whether they had not been rather precipitate in deposing his brother, Muley Aben Hassan.

That superannuated monarch remained in his faithful town of Almunecar, on the border of the Mediterranean, surrounded by a few adherents, together with his wife Zorayna and his children; and he had all his treasures safe in his possession. The fiery heart of the old king was almost burnt out, and all his powers of doing either harm or good seemed at an end.

While in this passive and helpless state, his brother El Zagal manifested a sudden anxiety for his health. He had him removed, with all tenderness and care, to Salobreña, another fortress on the Mediterranean coast, famous for its pure and salubrious air; and the alcayde, who was a devoted adherent of El Zagal, was charged to have especial care that nothing was wanting to the comfort and solace of his brother.

Salobreña was a small town, situated on a lofty and rocky hill, in the midst of a beautiful and fertile vega, shut up on three sides by mountains, and opening on the fourth to the Mediterranean. It was protected by strong walls and a powerful castle, and, being deemed impregnable, was often used by the Moorish kings as a place of deposit for their treasures. They were accustomed also to assign it as a residence for such of their sons and brothers as might endanger the security of their reign. Here the princes lived, in luxurious repose: they had delicious gardens, perfumed baths, a harem of beauties at their command—nothing was denied them but the liberty to depart; that alone was wanting to render this abode an earthly paradise.

Such was the delightful place appointed by El Zagal for the residence of his brother; but, notwithstanding its wonderful salubrity, the old monarch had not been removed thither many days before he expired. There was nothing extraordinary in his death: life with him had long been glimmering in the socket, and for some time past he might rather have been numbered with the dead than with the living. The public, however, are fond of seeing things in a sinister and mysterious point of view, and there were many dark surmises as to the cause of this event. El Zagal acted in a manner to heighten these suspicions: he caused the treasures of his deceased brother to be packed on mules and brought to Granada, where he took possession of them, to the exclusion of the children of Aben Hassan. The sultana Zorayna and her two sons were

lodged in the Alhambra, in the tower of Cimaes. This was a residence in a palace—but it had proved a royal prison to the sultana Ayxa la Horra, and her youthful son Boabdil. There the unhappy Zorayna had time to meditate upon the disappointment of all those ambitious schemes for herself and children, for which she had stained her conscience with so many crimes, and induced her cruel husband to imbrue his hands in the blood of his other offspring.

The corpse of old Muley Aben Hassan was also brought to Granada, not in a state becoming the remains of a once powerful sovereign, but transported on a mule, like the corpse of the poorest peasant. It received no honor or ceremonial from El Zagal, and appears to have been interred obscurely, to prevent any popular sensation; and it is recorded by an ancient and faithful chronicler of the time, that the body of the old monarch was deposited by two Christian captives in his osario, or charnel-house.* Such was the end of the turbulent Muley Aben Hassan, who, after passing his life in constant contests for empire, could scarce gain quiet admission into the corner of a sepulchre.

No sooner were the populace well assured that old Muley Aben Hassan was dead, and beyond recovery, than they all began to extol his memory and deplore his loss. They admitted that he had been fierce and cruel, but then he had been brave; he had, to be sure, pulled this war upon their heads, but he had likewise been crushed by it. In a word, *he was dead*; and his death atoned for every fault; for a king, recently dead, is generally either a hero or a saint.

In proportion as they ceased to hate old Muley Aben Hassan, they began to hate his brother El Zagal. The circumstances of the old king's death, the eagerness to appropriate his treasures, the scandalous neglect of his corpse, and the imprisonment of his sultana and children, all filled the public mind with gloomy suspicions; and the epithet of Fratricide! was sometimes substituted for that of El Zagal, in the low murmurings of the people.

As the public must always have some object to like as well as to hate, there began once more to be an inquiry after their fugitive king, Boabdil el Chico. That unfortunate monarch was still at Cordova, existing on the cool courtesy and meagre friendship of Ferdinand; which had waned exceedingly, ever

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 77.

since Boabdil had ceased to have any influence in his late dominions. The reviving interest expressed in his fate by the Moorish public, and certain secret overtures made to him, once more aroused the sympathy of Ferdinand: he immediately advised Boabdil again to set up his standard within the frontiers of Granada, and furnished him with money and means for the purpose. Boabdil advanced but a little way into his late territories; he took up his post at Velez el Blanco, a strong town on the confines of Murcia; there he established the shadow of a court, and stood, as it were, with one foot over the border, and ready to draw that back upon the least alarm. His presence in the kingdom, however, and his assumption of royal state, gave life to his faction in Granada. The inhabitants of the Albaycin, the poorest but most warlike part of the populace, were generally in his favor: the more rich, courtly, and aristocratical inhabitants of the quarter of the Alhambra, rallied round what appeared to be the most stable authority, and supported the throne of El Zagal. So it is, in the admirable order of sublunary affairs: every thing seeks its kind; the rich befriend the rich, the powerful stand by the powerful, the poor enjoy the patronage of the poor—and thus a universal harmony prevails.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF THE CHRISTIAN ARMY WHICH ASSEMBLED AT THE CITY OF CORDOVA.

GREAT and glorious was the style with which the Catholic sovereigns opened another year's campaign of this eventful war. It was like commencing another act of a stately and heroic drama, where the curtain rises to the inspiring sound of martial melody, and the whole stage glitters with the array of warriors and the pomp of arms. The ancient city of Cordova was the place appointed by the sovereigns for the assemblage of the troops; and early in the spring of 1486, the fair valley of the Guadalquivir resounded with the shrill blast of trumpet, and the impatient neighing of the war-horse. In this splendid era of Spanish chivalry, there was a rivalry among the nobles who most should distinguish himself by the splen-

dor of his appearance, and the number and equipments of his feudal followers. Every day beheld some cavalier of note, the representative of some proud and powerful house, entering the gates of Cordova with sound of trumpet, and displaying his banner and device, renowned in many a contest. He would appear in sumptuous array, surrounded by pages and lackeys no less gorgeously attired, and followed by a host of vassals and retainers, horse and foot, all admirably equipped in burnished armor.

Such was the state of Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, duke of Infantado; who may be cited as a picture of a warlike noble of those times. He brought with him five hundred men-at-arms of his household, armed and mounted *à la gineta* and *à la guisa*. The cavaliers who attended him were magnificently armed and dressed. The housings of fifty of his horses were of rich cloth, embroidered with gold; and others were of brocade. The sumpter mules had housings of the same, with halters of silk; while the bridles, head-pieces, and all the harnessing glittered with silver.

The camp equipage of these noble and luxurious warriors was equally magnificent. Their tents were gay pavilions, of various colors, fitted up with silken hangings and decorated with fluttering pennons. They had vessels of gold and silver for the service of their tables, as if they were about to engage in a course of stately feasts and courtly revels, instead of the stern encounters of rugged and mountainous warfare. Sometimes they passed through the streets of Cordova at night, in splendid cavalcade, with great numbers of lighted torches, the rays of which falling upon polished armor and nodding plumes, and silken scarfs, and trappings of golden embroidery, filled all beholders with admiration.*

But it was not the chivalry of Spain alone which thronged the streets of Cordova. The fame of this war had spread throughout Christendom: it was considered a kind of crusade; and Catholic knights from all parts hastened to signalize themselves in so holy a cause. There were several valiant chevaliers from France, among whom the most distinguished was Gaston du Leon, Seneschal of Toulouse. With him came a gallant train, well armed and mounted, and decorated with rich surtouts and panaches of feathers. These cavaliers, it is said, eclipsed all others in the light festivities of the court:

* Pulgar, part 3, cap. 41, 56.

they were devoted to the fair, but not after the solemn and passionate manner of the Spanish lovers; they were gay, gallant, and joyous in their amours, and captivated by the vivacity of their attacks. They were at first held in light estimation by the grave and stately Spanish knights, until they made themselves to be respected by their wonderful prowess in the field.

The most conspicuous of the volunteers, however, who appeared in Cordova on this occasion, was an English knight of royal connection. This was the lord Scales, earl of Rivers, brother to the queen of England, wife of Henry VII. He had distinguished himself in the preceding year, at the battle of Bosworth field, where Henry Tudor, then earl of Richmond, overcame Richard III. That decisive battle having left the country at peace, the earl of Rivers, having conceived a passion for warlike scenes, repaired to the Castilian court, to keep his arms in exercise, in a campaign against the Moors. He brought with him a hundred archers, all dexterous with the long-bow and the cloth-yard arrow; also two hundred yeoman, armed cap-a-pie, who fought with pike and battle-axe,—men robust of frame, and of prodigious strength. The worthy padre Fray Antonio Agapida describes this stranger knight and his followers, with his accustomed accuracy and minuteness.

“This cavalier,” he observes, “was from the far island of England, and brought with him a train of his vassals; men who had been hardened in certain civil wars which raged in their country. They were a comely race of men, but too fair and fresh for warriors, not having the sun-burnt warlike hue of our old Castilian soldiery. They were huge feeders also, and deep carousers, and could not accommodate themselves to the sober diet of our troops, but must fain eat and drink after the manner of their own country. They were often noisy and unruly, also, in their wassail; and their quarter of the camp was prone to be a scene of loud revel and sudden brawl. They were, withal, of great pride, yet it was not like our inflammable Spanish pride; they stood not much upon the *pundonor*, the high punctilio, and rarely drew the stiletto in their disputes; but their pride was silent and contumelious. Though from a remote and somewhat barbarous island, they believed themselves the most perfect men upon earth, and magnified their chieftain, the lord Scales, beyond the greatest of their grandees. With all this, it must be said of them that they were marvellous good men in the field, dexterous archers, and

powerful with the battle-axe. In their great pride and self-will, they always sought to press in the advance and take the post of danger, trying to outvie our Spanish chivalry. They did not rush on fiercely to the fight, nor make a brilliant onset like the Moorish and Spanish troops, but they went into the fight deliberately and persisted obstinately, and were slow to find out when they were beaten. Withal they were much esteemed, yet little liked by our soldiery, who considered them staunch companions in the field, but coveted little fellowship with them in the camp.

"Their commander, the lord Scales, was an accomplished cavalier, of gracious and noble presence and fair speech; it was a marvel to see so much courtesy in a knight brought up so far from our Castilian court. He was much honored by the king and queen, and found great favor with the fair dames about the court, who indeed are rather prone to be pleased with foreign cavaliers. He went always in costly state, attended by pages and esquires, and accompanied by noble young cavaliers of his country, who had enrolled themselves under his banner, to learn the gentle exercise of arms. In all pageants and festivals, the eyes of the populace were attracted by the singular bearing and rich array of the English earl and his train, who prided themselves in always appearing in the garb and manner of their country—and were indeed something very magnificent, delectable, and strange to behold."

The worthy chronicler is no less elaborate in his description of the Masters of Santiago, Calatrava, and Alcantara, and their valiant knights, armed at all points, and decorated with the badges of their orders. These, he affirms, were the flower of Christian chivalry: being constantly in service, they became more steadfast and accomplished in discipline, than the irregular and temporary levies of the feudal nobles. Calm, solemn, and stately, they sat like towers upon their powerful chargers. On parades, they manifested none of the show and ostentation of the other troops: neither, in battle, did they endeavor to signalize themselves by any fiery vivacity, or desperate and vain-glorious exploit—every thing, with them, was measured and sedate; yet it was observed that none were more warlike in their appearance in the camp, or more terrible for their achievements in the field.

The gorgeous magnificence of the Spanish nobles found but little favor in the eyes of the sovereigns. They saw that it caused a competition in expense, ruinous to cavaliers of

moderate fortune; and they feared that a softness and effeminacy might thus be introduced, incompatible with the stern nature of the war. They signified their disapprobation to several of the principal noblemen, and recommended a more sober and soldierlike display while in actual service.

"These are rare troops for a tourney, my lord," said Ferdinand to the duke of Infantado, as he beheld his retainers glittering in gold and embroidery; "but gold, though gorgeous, is soft and yielding: iron is the metal for the field."

"Sire," replied the duke, "if my men parade in gold, your majesty will find they fight with steel." The king smiled, but shook his head, and the duke treasured up his speech in his heart.

It remains now to reveal the immediate object of this mighty and chivalrous preparation; which had, in fact, the gratification of a royal pique at bottom. The severe lesson which Ferdinand had received from the veteran Ali Atar, before the walls of Loxa, though it had been of great service in rendering him wary in his attacks upon fortified places, yet rankled sorely in his mind; and he had ever since held Loxa in peculiar odium. It was, in truth, one of the most belligerent and troublesome cities on the borders; incessantly harassing Andalusia by its incursions. It also intervened between the Christian territories and Alhama, and other important places gained in the kingdom of Granada. For all these reasons, king Ferdinand had determined to make another grand attempt upon this warrior city; and for this purpose, he had summoned to the field his most powerful chivalry.

It was in the month of May, that the king sallied from Cordova, at the head of his army. He had twelve thousand cavalry and forty thousand foot-soldiers, armed with cross-bows, lances, and arquebusses. There were six thousand pioneers, with hatchets, pickaxes, and crowbars, for leveling roads. He took with him, also, a great train of lombards and other heavy artillery, with a body of Germans skilled in the service of ordnance and the art of battering walls.

It was a glorious spectacle (says Fray Antonio Agapida) to behold this pompous pageant issuing forth from Cordova, the pennons and devices of the proudest houses of Spain, with those of gallant stranger knights, fluttering above a sea of crests and plumes; to see it slowly moving, with flash of helm, and cuirass, and buckler, across the ancient bridge, and reflected in the waters of the Guadalquivir, while the

neigh of steed and blast of trumpet vibrated in the air, and resounded to the distant mountains. "But, above all," concludes the good father, with his accustomed zeal, "it was triumphant to behold the standard of the faith every where displayed, and to reflect that this was no worldly-minded army, intent upon some temporal scheme of ambition or revenge; but a Christian host, bound on a crusade to extirpate the vile seed of Mahomet from the land, and to extend the pure dominion of the church."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

HOW FRESH COMMOTIONS BROKE OUT IN GRANADA, AND HOW
THE PEOPLE UNDERTOOK TO ALLAY THEM.

WHILE perfect unity of object and harmony of operation gave power to the Christian arms, the devoted kingdom of Granada continued a prey to internal feuds. The transient popularity of El Zagal had declined ever since the death of his brother, and the party of Boabdil el Chico was daily gaining strength: the Albaycin and the Alhambra were again arrayed against each other in deadly strife, and the streets of unhappy Granada were daily dyed in the blood of her children. In the midst of these dissensions, tidings arrived of the formidable army assembling at Cordova. The rival factions paused in their infatuated brawls, and were roused to a temporary sense of the common danger. They forthwith resorted to their old expedient of new-modelling their government, or rather of making and unmaking kings. The elevation of El Zagal to the throne had not produced the desired effect—what then was to be done? Recall Boabdil el Chico, and acknowledge him again as sovereign? While they were in a popular tumult of deliberation, Hamet Aben Zarrax, surnamed El Santo, arose among them. This was the same wild, melancholy man, who had predicted the woes of Granada. He issued from one of the caverns of the adjacent height which overhangs the Darro, and has since been called the Holy Mountain. His appearance was more haggard than ever; for the unheeded spirit of prophecy seemed to have turned inwardly, and preyed upon his vitals. "Beware, O

Moslems," exclaimed he, "of men who are eager to govern, yet are unable to protect. Why slaughter each other for El Chico or El Zagal? Let your kings renounce their contests, unite for the salvation of Granada, or let them be deposed."

Hamet Aben Zarrax had long been revered as a saint—he was now considered an oracle. The old men and the nobles immediately consulted together, how the two rival kings might be brought to accord. They had tried most expedients: it was now determined to divide the kingdom between them; giving Granada, Malaga, Velez Malaga, Almeria, Almunecar, and their dependencies, to El Zagal—and the residue to Boabdil el Chico. Among the cities granted to the latter, Loxa was particularly specified, with a condition that he should immediately take command of it in person; for the council thought the favor he enjoyed with the Castilian monarchs might avert the threatened attack.

El Zagal readily acceded to this arrangement; he had been hastily elevated to the throne by an ebullition of the people, and might be as hastily cast down again. It secured him one-half of a kingdom to which he had no hereditary right, and he trusted to force or fraud to gain the other half hereafter. The wily old monarch even sent a deputation to his nephew, making a merit of offering him cheerfully the half which he had thus been compelled to relinquish, and inviting him to enter into an amicable coalition for the good of the country.

The heart of Boabdil shrunk from all connection with a man who had sought his life, and whom he regarded as the murderer of his kindred. He accepted one-half of the kingdom as an offer from the nation, not to be rejected by a prince who scarcely held possession of the ground he stood on. He asserted, nevertheless, his absolute right to the whole, and only submitted to the partition out of anxiety for the present good of his people. He assembled his handful of adherents, and prepared to hasten to Loxa. As he mounted his horse to depart, Hamet Aben Zarrax stood suddenly before him. "Be true to thy country and thy faith," cried he: "hold no further communication with these Christian dogs. Trust not the hollow-hearted friendship of the Castilian king; he is mining the earth beneath thy feet. Choose one of two things; be a sovereign or a slave—thou canst not be both."

Boabdil ruminated on these words; he made many wise resolutions, but he was prone always to act from the impulse of the moment, and was unfortunately given to temporize in

his policy. He wrote to Ferdinand, informing him that Loxa and certain other cities had returned to their allegiance, and that he held them as vassal to the Castilian crown, according to their convention. He conjured him, therefore, to refrain from any meditated attack, offering free passage to the Spanish army to Malaga, or any other place under the dominion of his uncle.*

Ferdinand turned a deaf ear to the entreaty, and to all professions of friendship and vassalage. Boabdil was nothing to him, but as an instrument for stirring up the flames of civil war. He now insisted that he had entered into a hostile league with his uncle, and had consequently forfeited all claims to his indulgence; and he prosecuted, with the greater earnestness, his campaign against the city of Loxa.

"Thus," observes the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "thus did this most sagacious sovereign act upon the text in the eleventh chapter of the Evangelist St. Luke, that 'a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.' He had induced these infidels to waste and destroy themselves by internal dissensions, and finally cast forth the survivor; while the Moorish monarchs, by their ruinous contests, made good the old Castilian proverb in cases of civil war, 'El vencido vencido, y el vencedor perdido,' (the conquered conquered, and the conqueror undone.)"†

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HOW KING FERDINAND HELD A COUNCIL OF WAR, AT THE ROCK OF THE LOVERS.

THE royal army, on its march against Loxa, lay encamped, one pleasant evening in May, in a meadow on the banks of the river Yeguas, around the foot of a lofty cliff called the Rock of the Lovers. The quarters of each nobleman formed as it were a separate little encampment; his stately pavilion, surmounted by his fluttering pennon, rising above the surrounding tents of his vassals and retainers. A little apart from the others, as it were in proud reserve, was the encampment of the English earl. It was sumptuous in its furniture, and complete in all

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 68.

† Garibay, lib. 40, c. 23.

its munitions. Archers, and soldiers armed with battle-axes, kept guard around it; while above, the standard of England rolled out its ample folds, and flapped in the evening breeze.

The mingled sounds of various tongues and nations were heard from the soldiery, as they watered their horses in the stream, or busied themselves round the fires which began to glow, here and there, in the twilight: the gay chanson of the Frenchman, singing of his amours on the pleasant banks of the Loire, or the sunny regions of the Garonne; the broad guttural tones of the German, chanting some doughty *krieger lied*, or extolling the vintage of the Rhine; the wild romance of the Spaniard, reciting the achievements of the Cid, and many a famous passage of the Moorish wars; and the long and melancholy ditty of the Englishman, treating of some feudal hero or redoubtable outlaw of his distant island.

On a rising ground, commanding a view of the whole encampment, stood the ample and magnificent pavilion of the king, with the banner of Castile and Arragon, and the holy standard of the cross, erected before it. In this tent were assembled the principal commanders of the army, having been summoned by Ferdinand to a council of war, on receiving tidings that Boabdil had thrown himself into Loxa with a considerable reinforcement. After some consultation, it was determined to invest Loxa on both sides: one part of the army should seize upon the dangerous but commanding height of Santo Albohacen, in front of the city; while the remainder, making a circuit, should encamp on the opposite side.

No sooner was this resolved upon, than the marques of Cadiz stood forth and claimed the post of danger in behalf of himself and those cavaliers, his companions in arms, who had been compelled to relinquish it by the general retreat of the army on the former siege. The enemy had exulted over them, as if driven from it in disgrace. To regain that perilous height, to pitch their tents upon it, and to avenge the blood of their valiant compeer, the Master of Calatrava, who had fallen upon it, was due to their fame; the marques demanded therefore that they might lead the advance and secure that height, engaging to hold the enemy employed until the main army should take its position on the opposite side of the city.

King Ferdinand readily granted his permission; upon which the count de Cabra entreated to be admitted to a share of the enterprise. He had always been accustomed to serve in the advance; and now that Boabdil was in the field, and a king

was to be taken, he could not content himself with remaining in the rear. Ferdinand yielded his consent, for he was disposed to give the good count every opportunity to retrieve his late disaster.

The English earl, when he heard there was an enterprise of danger in question, was hot to be admitted to the party; but the king restrained his ardor. "These cavaliers," said he, "conceive that they have an account to settle with their pride; let them have the enterprise to themselves, my lord; if you follow these Moorish wars long, you will find no lack of perilous service."

The marques of Cadiz, and his companions in arms, struck their tents before daybreak; they were five thousand horse and twelve thousand foot, and marched rapidly along the defiles of the mountains; the cavaliers being anxious to strike the blow, and get possession of the height of Albohacen, before the king with the main army should arrive to their assistance.

The city of Loxa stands on a high hill, between two mountains, on the banks of the Xenel. To attain the height of Albohacen, the troops had to pass over a tract of rugged and broken country, and a deep valley, intersected by those canals and water-courses with which the Moors irrigated their lands: they were extremely embarrassed in this part of their march, and in imminent risk of being cut up in detail before they could reach the height.

The count de Cabra, with his usual eagerness, endeavored to push across this valley, in defiance of every obstacle: he, in consequence, soon became entangled with his cavalry among the canals; but his impatience would not permit him to retrace his steps and choose a more practicable but circuitous route. Others slowly crossed another part of the valley, by the aid of pontoons; while the marques of Cadiz, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and the count de Ureña, being more experienced in the ground from their former campaign, made a circuit round the bottom of the height, and, winding up it, began to display their squadrons and elevate their banners on the redoubtable post, which, in the former siege, they had been compelled so reluctantly to abandon.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HOW THE ROYAL ARMY APPEARED BEFORE THE CITY OF LOXA, AND HOW IT WAS RECEIVED; AND OF THE DOUGHTY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH EARL.

THE advance of the Christian army upon Loxa, threw the wavering Boabdil el Chico into one of his usual dilemmas; and he was greatly perplexed between his oath of allegiance to the Spanish sovereigns, and his sense of duty to his subjects. His doubts were determined by the sight of the enemy glittering upon the height of Albohacen, and by the clamors of the people to be led forth to battle. "Allah!" exclaimed he, "thou knowest my heart: thou knowest I have been true in my faith to this Christian monarch. I have offered to hold Loxa as his vassal, but he has preferred to approach it as an enemy—on his head be the infraction of our treaty!"

Boabdil was not wanting in courage; he only needed decision. When he had once made up his mind, he acted vigorously; the misfortune was, he either did not make it up at all, or he made it up too late. He who decides tardily generally acts rashly, endeavoring to make up by hurry of action for slowness of deliberation. Boabdil hastily buckled on his armor, and sallied forth, surrounded by his guards, and at the head of five hundred horse and four thousand foot, the flower of his army. Some he detached to skirmish with the Christians who were scattered and perplexed in the valley, and to prevent their concentrating their forces; while, with his main body, he pressed forward to drive the enemy from the height of Albohacen, before they had time to collect there in any number, or to fortify themselves in that important position.

The worthy count de Cabra was yet entangled with his cavalry among the water-courses of the valley, when he heard the war-cries of the Moors, and saw their army rushing over the bridge. He recognized Boabdil himself, by his splendid armor, the magnificent caparison of his steed, and the brilliant guard which surrounded him. The royal host swept on toward the height of Albohacen: an intervening hill hid it from his sight; but loud shouts and cries, the din of drums and trumpets, and the reports of arquebusses, gave note that the battle had begun.

Here was a royal prize in the field, and the count de Cabra unable to get into the action! The good cavalier was in an agony of impatience; every attempt to force his way across the valley, only plunged him into new difficulties. At length, after many eager but ineffectual efforts, he was obliged to order his troops to dismount, and slowly and carefully to lead their horses back, along slippery paths, and amid splashes of mire and water, where often there was scarce a foothold. The good count groaned in spirit, and sweat with mere impatience as he went, fearing the battle might be fought, and the prize won or lost, before he could reach the field. Having at length toilsomely unravelled the mazes of the valley, and arrived at firmer ground, he ordered his troops to mount, and led them full gallop to the height. Part of the good count's wishes were satisfied, but the dearest were disappointed: he came in season to partake of the very hottest of the fight, but the royal prize was no longer in the field.

Boabdil had led on his men with impetuous valor, or rather with hurried rashness. Heedlessly exposing himself in the front of the battle, he received two wounds in the very first encounter. His guards rallied round him, defended him with matchless valor, and bore him, bleeding, out of the action. The count de Cabra arrived just in time to see the loyal squadron crossing the bridge, and slowly conveying their disabled monarch towards the gate of the city.

The departure of Boabdil made no difference in the fury of the battle. A Moorish warrior, dark and terrible in aspect, mounted on a black charger and followed by a band of savage Gomeres, rushed forward to take the lead. It was Hamet el Zegri, the fierce alcaide of Ronda, with the remnant of his once redoubtable garrison. Animated by his example, the Moors renewed their assaults upon the height. It was bravely defended, on one side by the marques of Cadiz, on another by Don Alonzo de Aguilar; and as fast as the Moors ascended, they were driven back and dashed down the declivities. The count de Ureña took his stand upon the fatal spot where his brother had fallen; his followers entered with zeal into the feelings of their commander, and heaps of the enemy sunk beneath their weapons—sacrifices to the manes of the lamented Master of Calatrava.

The battle continued with incredible obstinacy. The Moors knew the importance of the height to the safety of the city; the cavaliers felt their honors staked to maintain it. Fresh

supplies of troops were poured out of the city; some battled on the height, while some attacked the Christians who were still in the valley and among the orchards and gardens, to prevent their uniting their forces. The troops in the valley were gradually driven back, and the whole host of the Moors swept around the height of Albohacen. The situation of the marques de Cadiz and his companions was perilous in the extreme: they were a mere handful; and, while they were fighting hand to hand with the Moors who assailed the height, they were galled from a distance by the cross-bows and arquebusses of a host that augmented each moment in number. At this critical juncture, king Ferdinand emerged from the mountains with the main body of the army, and advanced to an eminence commanding a full view of the field of action. By his side was the noble English cavalier, the earl of Rivers. This was the first time he had witnessed a scene of Moorish warfare. He looked with eager interest at the chance medley fight before him, where there was the wild career of cavalry, the irregular and tumultuous rush of infantry, and where Christian helm and Moorish turban were intermingled in deadly struggle. The high blood of the English knight mounted at the sight, and his soul was stirred within him, by the confused war-cries, the clangor of drums and trumpets, and the reports of arquebusses, that came echoing up the mountains. Seeing that the king was sending a reinforcement to the field, he entreated permission to mingle in the affray, and fight according to the fashion of his country. His request being granted, he alighted from his steed: he was merely armed *en blanco*, that is to say, with morion, back-piece, and breast-plate; his sword was girded by his side, and in his hand he wielded a powerful battle-axe. He was followed by a body of his yeomen, armed in like manner, and by a band of archers with bows made of the tough English yew-tree. The earl turned to his troops, and addressed them briefly and bluntly, according to the manner of his country. "Remember, my merry men all," said he, "the eyes of strangers are upon you; you are in a foreign land, fighting for the glory of God, and the honor of merry old England!" A loud shout was the reply. The earl waved his battle-axe over his head: "St. George for England!" cried he; and to the inspiring sound of this old English war-cry, he and his followers rushed down to the battle with manly and courageous heart.*

* Cura de los Palacios.

They soon made their way into the midst of the enemy; but when engaged in the hottest of the fight, they made no shouts or outcries. They pressed steadily forward, dealing their blows to right and left, hewing down the Moors, and cutting their way, with their battle-axes, like woodmen in a forest; while the archers, pressing into the opening they made, plied their bows vigorously, and spread death on every side.

When the Castilian mountaineers beheld the valor of the English yeomanry, they would not be outdone in hardihood. They could not vie with them in weight or bulk, but for vigor and activity they were surpassed by none. They kept pace with them, therefore, with equal heart and rival prowess, and gave a brave support to the stout Englishmen.

The Moors were confounded by the fury of these assaults, and disheartened by the loss of Hemet el Zegri, who was carried wounded from the field. They gradually fell back upon the bridge; the Christians followed up their advantage, and drove them over it tumultuously. The Moors retreated into the suburb; and lord Rivers and his troops entered with them pell-mell, fighting in the streets and in the houses. King Ferdinand came up to the scene of action with his royal guard, and the infidels were driven within the city walls. Thus were the suburbs gained by the hardihood of the English lord, without such an event having been premeditated.*

The earl of Rivers, notwithstanding he had received a wound, still urged forward in the attack. He penetrated almost to the city gate, in defiance of a shower of missiles that slew many of his followers. A stone, hurled from the battlements, checked his impetuous career: it struck him in the face, dashed out two of his front teeth, and laid him senseless on the earth. He was removed to a short distance by his men; but, recovering his senses, refused to permit himself to be taken from the suburb.

When the contest was over, the streets presented a piteous spectacle—so many of their inhabitants had died in the defence of their thresholds, or been slaughtered without resistance. Among the victims was a poor weaver, who had been at work in his dwelling at this turbulent moment. His wife urged him to fly into the city. “Why should I fly?” said the Moor—“to be reserved for hunger and slavery? I tell you, wife, I will await the foe here; for better is it to die quickly

* *Cura de los Palacios.* MS.

by the steel, than to perish piecemeal in chains and dungeons." He said no more, but resumed his occupation of weaving; and in the indiscriminate fury of the assault, was slaughtered at his loom.*

The Christians remained masters of the field, and proceeded to pitch three encampments for the prosecution of the siege. The king, with the great body of the army, took a position on the side of the city next to Granada: the marques of Cadiz and his brave companions once more pitched their tents upon the heights of Santo Albohacen: but the English earl planted his standard sturdily within the suburb he had taken.

CHAPTER XL.

CONCLUSION OF THE SIEGE OF LOXA.

HAVING possession of the heights of Albohacen and the suburb of the city, the Christians were enabled to choose the most favorable situations for their batteries. They immediately destroyed the stone bridge, by which the garrison had made its sallies; and they threw two wooden bridges across the river, and others over the canals and streams, so as to establish an easy communication between the different camps.

When all was arranged, a heavy fire was opened upon the city from various points. They threw, not only balls of stone and iron, but great carcasses of fire, which burst like meteors on the houses, wrapping them instantly in a blaze. The walls were shattered, and the towers toppled down, by tremendous discharges from the lombards. Through the openings thus made, they could behold the interior of the city—houses tumbling or in flames—men, women, and children, flying in terror through the streets, and slaughtered by the shower of missiles, sent through the openings from smaller artillery, and from cross-blows and arquebusses.

The Moors attempted to repair the breaches, but fresh discharges from the lombards buried them beneath the ruins of the walls they were mending. In their despair, many of the inhabitants rushed forth into the narrow streets of the suburbs, and assailed the Christians with darts, scimitars, and

* Pulgar, part 3, c. 58.

poniards, seeking to destroy rather than defend, and heedless of death, in the confidence that to die fighting with an unbeliever, was to be translated at once to paradise.

For two nights and a day this awful scene continued; when certain of the principal inhabitants began to reflect upon the hopelessness of the conflict: their king was disabled, their principal captains were either killed or wounded, their fortifications little better than heaps of ruins. They had urged the unfortunate Boabdil to the conflict; they now clamored for a capitulation. A parley was procured from the Christian monarch, and the terms of surrender were soon adjusted. They were to yield up the city immediately, with all their Christian captives, and to sally forth with as much of their property as they could take with them. The marques of Cadiz, on whose honor and humanity they had great reliance, was to escort them to Granada, to protect them from assault or robbery: such as chose to remain in Spain were to be permitted to reside in Castile, Arragon, or Valencia. As to Boabdil el Chico, he was to do homage as vassal to king Ferdinand, but no charge was to be urged against him of having violated his former pledge. If he should yield up all pretensions to Granada, the title of duke of Cuadix was to be assigned to him, and the territory thereto annexed, provided it should be recovered from El Zagal within six months.

The capitulation being arranged, they gave as hostages the alcayde of the city, and the principal officers, together with the sons of their late chieftain, the veteran Ali Atar. The warriors of Loxa then issued forth, humbled and dejected at having to surrender those walls which they had so long maintained with valor and renown; and the women and children filled the air with lamentations, at being exiled from their native homes.

Last came forth Boabdil, most truly called El Zogoybi, the unlucky. Accustomed, as ~~he~~ he was, to be crowned and uncrowned, to be ransomed and treated as a matter of bargain, he had acceded of course to the capitulation. He was enfeebled by his wounds, and had an air of dejection; yet it is said, his conscience acquitted him of a breach of faith towards the Castilian sovereigns, and the personal valor he had displayed had caused a sympathy for him among many of the Christian cavaliers. He knelt to Ferdinand according to the forms of vassalage, and then departed, in melancholy mood, for Priego, a town about three leagues distant.

Ferdinand immediately ordered Loxa to be repaired, and strongly garrisoned. He was greatly elated at the capture of this place, in consequence of his former defeat before its walls. He passed great encomiums upon the commanders who had distinguished themselves; and historians dwell particularly upon his visit to the tent of the English earl. His majesty consoled him for the loss of his teeth, by the consideration that he might otherwise have lost them by natural decay; whereas the lack of them would now be esteemed a beauty, rather than a defect, serving as a trophy of the glorious cause in which he had been engaged.

The earl replied, that he gave thanks to God and to the holy virgin, for being thus honored by a visit from the most potent king in Christendom; that he accepted with all gratitude his gracious consolation for the loss of his teeth, though he held it little to lose two teeth in the service of God, who had given him all:—"A speech," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "full of most courtly wit and Christian piety; and one only marvels that it should have been made by a native of an island so far distant from Castile."

CHAPTER XLI.

CAPTURE OF ILLORA.

KING FERDINAND followed up his victory at Loxa, by laying siege to the strong town of Illora. This redoubtable fortress was perched upon a high rock, in the midst of a spacious valley. It was within four leagues of the Moorish capital; and its lofty castle, keeping vigilant watch over a wide circuit of country, was termed the right eye of Granada.

The alcaide of Illora was one of the bravest of the Moorish commanders, and made every preparation to defend his fortress to the last extremity. He sent the women and children, the aged and infirm, to the metropolis. He placed barricades in the suburbs, opened doors of communication from house to house, and pierced their walls with loop-holes for the discharge of cross-bows, arquebusses, and other missiles.

King Ferdinand arrived before the place, with all his forces; he stationed himself upon the hill of Encinilla, and distributed

the other encampments in various situations, so as to invest the fortress. Knowing the valiant character of the alcaide, and the desperate courage of the Moors, he ordered the encampments to be fortified with trenches and pallisadoes, the guards to be doubled, and sentinels to be placed in all the watch-towers of the adjacent heights.

When all was ready, the duke del Infantado demanded the attack; it was his first campaign, and he was anxious to disprove the royal insinuation made against the hardihood of his embroidered chivalry. Kind Ferdinand granted his demand, with a becoming compliment to his spirit; he ordered the count de Cabra to make a simultaneous attack upon a different quarter. Both chiefs led forth their troops;—those of the duke in fresh and brilliant armor, richly ornamented, and as yet uninjured by the service of the field; those of the count were weatherbeaten veterans, whose armor was dented and hacked in many a hard-fought battle. The youthful duke blushed at the contrast. “Cavaliers,” cried he, “we have been reproached with the finery of our array: let us prove that a trenchant blade may rest in a gilded sheath. Forward! to the foe! and I trust in God, that as we enter this affray knights well accoutred, so we shall leave it cavaliers well proved.” His men responded by eager acclamations, and the duke led them forward to the assault. He advanced under a tremendous shower of stones, darts, balls, and arrows; but nothing could check his career; he entered the suburb sword in hand; his men fought furiously, though with great loss, for every dwelling had been turned into a fortress. After a severe conflict, they succeeded in driving the Moors into the town, about the same time that the other suburb was carried by the count de Cabra and his veterans. The troops of the duke del Infantado came out of the contest thinned in number, and covered with blood, and dust, and wounds: they received the highest encomiums of the king, and there was never afterwards any sneer at their embroidery.

The suburbs being taken, three batteries, each furnished with eight huge lombards, were opened upon the fortress. The damage and havoc were tremendous, for the fortifications had not been constructed to withstand such engines. The towers were overthrown, the walls battered to pieces; the interior of the place was all exposed, houses demolished, and many people slain. The Moors were terrified by the tumbling ruins, and the tremendous din. The alcaide had resolved to

defend the place until the last extremity; he beheld it a heap of rubbish; there was no prospect of aid from Granada; his people had lost all spirit to fight, and were vociferous for a surrender; with a reluctant heart, he capitulated. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with all their effects, excepting their arms; and were escorted in safety by the duke del Infantado and the count de Cabra, to the bridge of Pinos, within two leagues of Granada.

King Ferdinand gave directions to repair the fortifications of Illora, and to place it in a strong state of defence. He left, as alcaide of the town and fortress, Gonsalvo de Cordova, younger brother of Don Alonzo de Aguilar. This gallant cavalier was captain of the royal guards of Ferdinand and Isabella, and gave already proofs of that prowess which afterwards rendered him so renowned.

CHAPTER XLII.

OF THE ARRIVAL OF QUEEN ISABELLA AT THE CAMP BEFORE MOCLIN; AND OF THE PLEASANT SAYINGS OF THE ENGLISH EARL.

THE war of Granada, however poets may embroider it with the flowers of their fancy, was certainly one of the sternest of those iron conflicts which have been celebrated under the name of holy wars. The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida dwells with unsated delight upon the succession of rugged mountain enterprises, bloody battles, and merciless sackings and ravages which characterized it: yet we find him on one occasion pausing in the full career of victory over the infidels, to detail a stately pageant of the Catholic sovereigns.

Immediately on the capture of Loxa, Ferdinand had written to Isabella, soliciting her presence at the camp, that he might consult with her as to the disposition of their newly acquired territories.

It was in the early part of June that the queen departed from Cordova, with the princess Isabella and numerous ladies of her court. She had a glorious attendance of cavaliers and pages, with many guards and domestics. There were forty mules, for the use of the queen, the princess, and their train.

As this courtly cavalcade approached the Rock of the

Lovers, on the banks of the river Yeguas, they beheld a splendid train of knights advancing to meet them. It was headed by that accomplished cavalier the marques duke de Cadiz, accompanied by the adelantado of Andalusia. He had left the camp the day after the capture of Illora, and advanced thus far to receive the queen and escort her over the borders. The queen received the marques with distinguished honor; for he was esteemed the mirror of chivalry. His actions in this war had become the theme of every tongue, and many hesitated not to compare him in prowess to the immortal Cid.*

Thus gallantly attended, the queen entered the vanquished frontier of Granada; journeying securely along the pleasant banks of the Xenel, so lately subject to the scourings of the Moors. She stopped at Loxa, where she administered aid and consolation to the wounded, distributing money among them for their support, according to their rank.

The king, after the capture of Illora, had removed his camp before the fortress of Moclin, with an intention of besieging it. Thither the queen proceeded, still escorted through the mountain roads by the marques of Cadiz. As Isabella drew near to the camp, the duke del Infantado issued forth a league and a half to receive her, magnificently arrayed, and followed by all his chivalry in glorious attire. With him came the standard of Seville, borne by the men-at-arms of that renowned city; and the Prior of St. Juan, with his followers. They arrayed themselves in order of battle, on the left of the road by which the queen was to pass.

The worthy Agapida is loyally minute, in his description of the state and grandeur of the Catholic sovereigns. The queen rode a chestnut mule, seated in a magnificent saddle-chair decorated with silver gilt. The housings of the mule were of fine crimson cloth; the borders embroidered with gold; the reins and head-piece were of satin, curiously embossed with needlework of silk, and wrought with golden letters. The queen wore a brial, or regal skirt of velvet, under which were others of brocade; a scarlet mantle, ornamented in the Moresco fashion; and a black hat, embroidered round the crown and brim.

The Infanta was likewise mounted on a chestnut mule, richly caparisoned: she wore a brial or skirt of black brocade, and a black mantle ornamented like that of the queen.

* Cura de los Palacios.

When the royal cavalcade passed by the chivalry of the duke del Infantado, which was drawn out in battle array, the queen made a reverence to the standard of Seville, and ordered it to pass to the right hand. When she approached the camp, the multitude ran forth to meet her, with great demonstrations of joy; for she was universally beloved by her subjects. All the battalions sallied forth in military array, bearing the various standards and banners of the camp, which were lowered in salutation as she passed.

The king now came forth in royal state, mounted on a superb chestnut horse, and attended by many grandees of Castile. He wore a jubon or close vest of crimson cloth, with cuisses or short skirts of yellow satin, a loose cassock of brocade, a rich Moorish scimitar, and a hat with plumes. The grandees who attended him were arrayed with wonderful magnificence, each according to his taste and invention.

These high and mighty princes (says Antonio Agapida) regard each other with great deference, as allied sovereigns, rather than with connubial familiarity as mere husband and wife. When they approached each other, therefore, before embracing, they made three profound reverences; the queen taking off her hat, and remaining in a silk net or cawl, with her face uncovered. The king then approached and embraced her, and kissed her respectfully on the cheek. He also embraced his daughter the princess; and, making the sign of the cross, he blessed her, and kissed her on the lips.*

The good Agapida seems scarcely to have been more struck with the appearance of the sovereigns, than with that of the English earl. He followed (says he) immediately after the king, with great pomp, and, in an extraordinary manner, taking precedence of all the rest. He was mounted "*a la guisa*," or with long stirrups, on a superb chestnut horse, with trappings of azure silk which reached to the ground. The housings were of mulberry, powdered with stars of gold. He was armed in proof, and wore over his armor a short French mantle of black brocade; he had a white French hat with plumes, and carried on his left arm a small round buckler, banded with gold. Five pages attended him, apparelled in silk and brocade, and mounted on horses sumptuously caparisoned; he had also a train of followers, bravely attired after the fashion of his country.

* Cura de los Palacios.

• He advanced in a chivalrous and courteous manner, making his reverences first to the queen and Infanta, and afterwards to the king. Queen Isabella received him graciously, complimenting him on his courageous conduct at Loxa, and condoling with him on the loss of his teeth. The earl, however, made light of his disfiguring wound; saying, that "our blessed Lord, who had built all that house, had opened a window there, that he might see more readily what passed within:"* whereupon the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida is more than ever astonished at the pregnant wit of this island cavalier. The earl continued some little distance by the side of the royal family, complimenting them all with courteous speeches, his horse curvetting and caracoling, but being managed with great grace and dexterity; leaving the grandees and the people at large, not more filled with admiration at the strangeness and magnificence of his state, than at the excellence of his horsemanship.†

To testify her sense of the gallantry and services of this noble English knight, who had come from so far to assist in their wars, the queen sent him the next day presents of twelve horses, with stately tents, fine linen, two beds with coverings of gold brocade, and many other articles of great value.

Having refreshed himself, as it were, with the description of this progress of queen Isabella to the camp, and the glorious pomp of the Catholic sovereigns, the worthy Antonio Agapida returns with renewed relish to his pious work of discomfiting the Moors.

The description of this royal pageant, and the particulars concerning the English earl, thus given from the manuscript of Fray Antonio Agapida, agree precisely with the chronicle of Andres Bernaldes, the curate of los Palacios. The English earl makes no further figure in this war. It appears from various histories, that he returned in the course of the year to England. In the following year, his passion for fighting took him to the continent at the head of four hundred adventurers, in aid of Francis, duke of Brittany, against Louis XI. of France. He was killed in the same year [1488] in the battle of St. Alban's, between the Bretons and the French.

* Pietro Martyr, Epist. 61.

† Cura de los Palacios.

CHAPTER XLIII.

HOW KING FERDINAND ATTACKED MOCLIN, AND OF THE STRANGE
EVENTS THAT ATTENDED ITS CAPTURE.

"THE Catholic sovereigns," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "had by this time closely clipped the right wing of the Moorish vulture." In other words, most of the strong fortresses along the western frontier of Granada had fallen beneath the Christian artillery. The army now lay encamped before the town of Moclin, on the frontier of Jaen, one of the most stubborn fortresses of the border. It stood on a high rocky hill, the base of which was nearly girdled by a river: a thick forest protected the back part of the town, towards the mountain. Thus strongly situated, it domineered, with its frowning battlements and massive towers, all the mountain passes into that part of the country, and was called "the shield of Granada." It had a double arrear of blood to settle with the Christians; two hundred years before, a Master of Santiago and all his cavaliers had been lanced by the Moors before its gates. It had recently made terrible slaughter among the troops of the good count de Cabra, in his precipitate attempt to entrap the old Moorish monarch. The pride of Ferdinand had been piqued by being obliged on that occasion to recede from his plan, and abandon his concerted attack on the place; he was now prepared to take a full revenge.

El Zagal, the old warrior king of Granada, anticipating a second attempt, had provided the place with ample ammunition and provisions; had ordered trenches to be digged, and additional bulwarks thrown up; and caused all the old men, the women, and the children, to be removed to the capital.

Such was the strength of the fortress, and the difficulties of its position, that Ferdinand anticipated much trouble in reducing it, and made every preparation for a regular siege. In the centre of his camp were two great mounds, one of sacks of flour, the other of grain, which were called the royal granary. Three batteries of heavy ordnance were opened against the citadel and principal towers, while smaller artillery, engines for the discharge of missiles, arquebusses and cross-bows, were distributed in various places, to keep up a fire into

any breaches that might be made, and upon those of the garrison who should appear on the battlements.

The lombards soon made an impression on the works, demolishing a part of the wall, and tumbling down several of those haughty towers, which from their height had been impregnable before the invention of gunpowder. The Moors repaired their walls as well as they were able, and, still confiding in the strength of their situation, kept up a resolute defence, firing down from their lofty battlements and towers upon the Christian camp. For two nights and a day an incessant fire was kept up, so that there was not a moment in which the roaring of ordnance was not heard, or some damage sustained by the Christians or the Moors. It was a conflict, however, more of engineers and artillerists than of gallant cavaliers; there was no sally of troops, or shock of armed men, or rush and charge of cavalry. The knights stood looking on with idle weapons, waiting until they should have an opportunity of signalizing their prowess by scaling the walls, or storming the breaches. As the place, however, was assailable only in one part, there was every prospect of a long and obstinate resistance.

The engineers, as usual, discharged not merely balls of stone and iron, to demolish the walls, but flaming balls of inextinguishable combustibles, designed to set fire to the houses. One of these, which passed high through the air like a meteor, sending out sparks and crackling as it went, entered the window of a tower which was used as a magazine of gunpowder. The tower blew up, with a tremendous explosion; the Moors who were upon its battlements were hurled into the air, and fell mangled in various parts of the town; and the houses in its vicinity were rent and overthrown as with an earthquake.

The Moors, who had never witnessed an explosion of the kind, ascribed the destruction of the tower to a miracle. Some who had seen the descent of the flaming ball, imagined that fire had fallen from heaven to punish them for their pertinacity. The pious Agapida, himself, believes that this fiery missive was conducted by divine agency to confound the infidels; an opinion in which he is supported by other Catholic historians.*

Seeing heaven and earth as it were combined against them,

* Pulgar. Garibay. Lucio Marino Siculo, *Cosas Memorales de Hispania* lib. 20.

the Moors lost all heart: they capitulated, and were permitted to depart with their effects, leaving behind all arms and munitions of war.

The Catholic army (says Antonio Agapida) entered Moclin in solemn state, not as a licentious host, intent upon plunder and desolation, but as a band of Christian warriors, coming to purify and regenerate the land. The standard of the cross, that ensign of this holy crusade, was borne in the advance, followed by the other banners of the army. Then came the king and queen, at the head of a vast number of armed cavaliers. They were accompanied by a band of priests and friars, with the choir of the royal chapel, chanting the canticle "*Te deum laudamus.*" As they were moving through the streets in this solemn manner, every sound hushed excepting the anthem of the choir, they suddenly heard, issuing as it were from under ground, a chorus of voices chanting the solemn response, "*Benedictum qui venit in nomine domini.*"* The procession paused in wonder. The sounds arose from Christian captives, and among them several priests, who were confined in subterraneous dungeons.

The heart of Isabella was greatly touched. She ordered the captives to be drawn forth from their cells, and was still more moved at beholding, by their wan, discolored, and emaciated appearance, how much they had suffered. Their hair and beards were overgrown and shagged; they were wasted by hunger, half naked, and in chains. She ordered that they should be clothed and cherished, and money furnished them to bear them to their homes.†

Several of the captives were brave cavaliers, who had been wounded and made prisoners, in the defeat of the count de Cabra by El Zagal, in the preceding year. There were also found other melancholy traces of that disastrous affair. On visiting the narrow pass where the defeat had taken place, the remains of several Christian warriors were found in thickets, or hidden behind rocks, or in the clefts of the mountains. These were some who had been struck from their horses, and wounded too severely to fly. They had crawled away from the scene of action, and concealed themselves to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, and had thus perished miserably and alone. The remains of those of note were known by their

* Marino Sicno.

† Illescas, Hist. Pontif. lib. 5, c. 20, § 1.

armor and devices, and were mourned over by their companions who had shared the disasters of that day.*

The queen had these remains piously collected, as the relics of so many martyrs who had fallen in the cause of the faith. They were interred with great solemnity in the mosques of Moclin, which had been purified and consecrated to Christian worship. "There," says Antonio Agapida, "rest the bones of those truly Catholic knights, in the holy ground which in a manner had been sanctified by their blood; and all pilgrims passing through those mountains offer up prayers and masses for the repose of their souls."

The queen remained for some time at Moclin, administering comfort to the wounded and the prisoners, bringing the newly acquired territory into order, and founding churches and monasteries and other pious institutions. "While the king marched in front, laying waste the land of the Philistines," says the figurative Antonio Agapida, "queen Isabella followed his traces as the binder follows the reaper, gathering and garnering the rich harvest that has fallen beneath his sickle. In this she was greatly assisted by the counsels of that cloud of bishops, friars, and other saintly men, which continually surrounded her, garnering the first fruits of this infidel land into the granaries of the church." Leaving her thus piously employed, the king pursued his career of conquest, determined to lay waste the vega, and carry fire and sword to the very gates of Granada.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HOW KING FERDINAND FORAGED THE VEGA; AND OF THE BATTLE OF THE BRIDGE OF PINOS, AND THE FATE OF THE TWO MOORISH BROTHERS.

MULEY ABDALLAH EL ZAGAL had been under a spell of ill fortune, ever since the suspicious death of the old king, his brother. Success had deserted his standard; and, with his fickle subjects, want of success was one of the greatest crimes in a sovereign. He found his popularity declining, and he lost

* Pulgar, part 3, cap. 61.

all confidence in his people. The Christian army marched in open defiance through his territories, and sat down deliberately before his fortresses; yet he dared not lead forth his legions to oppose them, lest the inhabitants of the Albaycin, ever ripe for a revolt, should rise and shut the gates of Granada against his return.

Every few days, some melancholy train entered the metropolis, the inhabitants of some captured town, bearing the few effects that had been spared them, and weeping and bewailing the desolation of their homes. When the tidings arrived that Illora and Moclin had fallen, the people were seized with consternation. "The right eye of Granada is extinguished," exclaimed they; "the shield of Granada is broken: what shall protect us from the inroad of the foe?" When the survivors of the garrisons of those towns arrived, with downcast looks, bearing the marks of battle, and destitute of arms and standards, the populace reviled them in their wrath; but they answered, "We fought as long as we had force to fight, or walls to shelter us; but the Christians laid our towns and battlements in ruins, and we looked in vain for aid from Granada."

The alcaydes of Illora and Moclin were brothers; they were alike in prowess, and the bravest among the Moorish chevaliers. They had been the most distinguished in all tilts and tourneys which graced the happier days of Granada, and had distinguished themselves in the sterner conflicts of the field. Acclamation had always followed their banners, and they had long been the delight of the people. Yet now, when they returned after the capture of their fortresses, they were followed by the unsteady populace with execrations. The hearts of the alcaydes swelled with indignation; they found the ingratitude of their countrymen still more intolerable than the hostility of the Christians.

Tidings came, that the enemy was advancing with his triumphant legions to lay waste the country about Granada. Still El Zagal did not dare to take the field. The two alcaydes of Illora and Moclin stood before him: "We have defended your fortresses," said they, "until we were almost buried under their ruins, and for our reward we receive scoffings and revilings; give us, O king, an opportunity where knightly valor may signalize itself, not shut up behind stone walls, but in the open conflict of the field. The enemy approaches to lay our country desolate; give us men to meet him in the advance,

and let shame light upon our heads if we be found wanting in the battle!"

The two brothers were sent forth, with a large force of horse and foot; El Zagal intended, should they be successful, to issue forth with his whole force, and by a decisive victory, repair the losses he had suffered. When the people saw the well-known standards of the brothers going forth to battle, there was a feeble shout: but the alcaides passed on with stern countenances, for they knew the same voices would curse them were they to return unfortunate. They cast a farewell look upon fair Granada, and upon the beautiful fields of their infancy, as if for these they were willing to lay down their lives, but not for an ungrateful people.

The army of Ferdinand had arrived within two leagues of Granada, at the Bridge of Pinos, a pass famous in the wars of the Moors and Christians for many a bloody conflict. It was the pass by which the Castilian monarchs generally made their inroads, and was capable of great defence, from the ruggedness of the country and the difficulty of the bridge. The king, with the main body of the army, had attained the brow of a hill, when they beheld the advance guard, under the marques of Cadiz and the Master of Santiago, furiously attacked by the enemy, in the vicinity of the bridge. The Moors rushed to the assault with their usual shouts, but with more than usual ferocity. There was a hard struggle at the bridge; both parties knew the importance of that pass.

The king particularly noted the prowess of two Moorish cavaliers, alike in arms and devices, and whom by their bearing and attendance he perceived to be commanders of the enemy. They were the two brothers, the alcaides of Illora and Moclin. Wherever they turned, they carried confusion and death into the ranks of the Christians; but they fought with desperation, rather than valor. The count de Cabra, and his brother Don Martin de Cordova, pressed forward with eagerness against them; but having advanced too precipitately, were surrounded by the foe, and in imminent danger. A young Christian knight, seeing their peril, hastened with his followers to their relief. The king recognized him for Don Juan de Arragon, count of Ribargoza, his own nephew; for he was illegitimate son of the duke of Villahermosa, illegitimate brother of king Ferdinand. The splendid armor of Don Juan, and the sumptuous caparison of his steed, rendered him a brilliant object of attack. He was assailed on all sides, and his

superb steed slain under him; yet still he fought valiantly, bearing for a time the brunt of the fight, and giving the exhausted forces of the count de Cabra time to recover breath.

Seeing the peril of these troops and the general obstinacy of the fight, the king ordered the royal standard to be advanced, and hastened, with all his forces, to the relief of the count de Cabra. At his approach, the enemy gave way, and retreated towards the bridge. The two Moorish commanders endeavored to rally their troops, and animate them to defend this pass to the utmost: they used prayers, remonstrances, menaces—but almost in vain. They could only collect a scanty handful of cavaliers; with these they planted themselves at the head of the bridge, and disputed it inch by inch. The fight was hot and obstinate, for but few could contend hand to hand, yet many discharged cross-bows and arquebusses from the banks. The river was covered with the floating bodies of the slain. The Moorish band of cavaliers was almost entirely cut to pieces; the two brothers fell, covered with wounds, upon the bridge they had so resolutely defended. They had given up the battle for lost, but had determined not to return alive to ungrateful Granada.

When the people of the capital heard how devotedly they had fallen, they lamented greatly their deaths, and extolled their memory: a column was erected to their honor in the vicinity of the bridge, which long went by the name of "the Tomb of the Brothers."

The army of Ferdinand now marched on, and established its camp in the vicinity of Granada. The worthy Agapida gives many triumphant details of the ravages committed in the vega, which was again laid waste; the grain, fruits, and other productions of the earth, destroyed—and that earthly paradise rendered a dreary desert. He narrates several fierce but ineffectual sallies and skirmishes of the Moors, in defence of their favorite plain; among which, one deserves to be mentioned, as it records the achievements of one of the saintly heroes of this war.

During one of the movements of the Christian army, near the walls of Granada, a battalion of fifteen hundred cavalry, and a large force of foot, had sallied from the city, and posted themselves near some gardens, which were surrounded by a canal, and traversed by ditches, for the purpose of irrigation.

The Moors beheld the duke del Infantado pass by, with his two splendid battalions; one of men-at-arms, the other of light

cavalry, armed *à la gineta*. In company with him, but following as a rear-guard, was Don Garcia Osorio, the belligerent bishop of Jaen, attended by Francisco Bovadillo, the corregidor of his city, and followed by two squadrons of men-at-arms, from Jaen, Anduxar, Ubeda, and Baeza.* The success of last year's campaign had given the good bishop an inclination for warlike affairs, and he had once more buckled on his cuirass.

The Moors were much given to stratagem in warfare. They looked wistfully at the magnificent squadrons of the duke del Infantado; but their martial discipline precluded all attack: the good bishop promised to be a more easy prey. Suffering the duke and his troops to pass unmolested, they approached the squadrons of the bishop, and, making a pretended attack, skirmished slightly, and fled in apparent confusion. The bishop considered the day his own, and, seconded by his corregidor Bovadillo, followed with valorous precipitation. The Moors fled into the *Huerta del Rey*, or orchard of the king; the troops of the bishop followed hotly after them.

When the Moors perceived their pursuers fairly embarrassed among the intricacies of the garden, they turned fiercely upon them, while some of their number threw open the sluices of the Xenel. In an instant, the canal which encircled and the ditches which traversed the garden, were filled with water, and the valiant bishop and his followers found themselves overwhelmed by a deluge.† A scene of great confusion succeeded. Some of the men of Jaen, stoutest of heart and hand, fought with the Moors in the garden, while others struggled with the water, endeavoring to escape across the canal, in which attempt many horses were drowned.

Fortunately, the duke del Infantado perceived the snare into which his companions had fallen, and dispatched his light cavalry to their assistance. The Moors were compelled to flight, and driven along the road of Elvira up to the gates of Granada.‡ Several Christian cavaliers perished in this affray; the bishop himself escaped with difficulty, having slipped from his saddle in crossing the canal, but saving himself by holding on to the tail of his charger. This perilous achievement seems to have satisfied the good bishop's belligerent propensities. He retired on his laurels, (says Agapida,) to his city of Jaen: where, in the fruition of all good things, he gradually waxed too corpulent for his corselet, which was hung up in the hall of

* Pulgar, part 3, cap. 62.

† Pulgar.

‡ Pulgar.

his episcopal palace; and we hear no more of his military deeds, throughout the residue of the holy war of Granada.*

King Ferdinand, having completed his ravage of the vega, and kept El Zagal shut up in his capital, conducted his army back through the pass of Lope to rejoin queen Isabella at Moclin. The fortresses lately taken being well garrisoned and supplied, he gave the command of the frontier to his cousin, Don Fadrique de Toledo, afterwards so famous in the Netherlands as the duke of Alva. The campaign being thus completely crowned with success, the sovereigns returned in triumph to the city of Cordova.

CHAPTER XLV.

ATTEMPT OF EL ZAGAL UPON THE LIFE OF BOABDIL, AND HOW THE LATTER WAS ROUSED TO ACTION.

No sooner did the last squadron of Christian cavalry disappear behind the mountain of Elvira, and the note of its trumpets die away upon the ear, than the long-suppressed wrath of old Muley El Zagal burst forth. He determined no longer to be half a king, reigning over a divided kingdom, in a divided capital; but to exterminate, by any means, fair or foul, his nephew Boabdil and his faction. He turned furiously upon those whose factious conduct had deterred him from sallying upon the foe; some he punished by confiscations, others by banishment, others by death. Once undisputed monarch of the entire kingdom, he trusted to his military skill to retrieve his fortunes, and drive the Christians over the frontier.

Boabdil, however, had again retired to Velez el Blanco, on the confines of Murcia, where he could avail himself, in case of emergency, of any assistance or protection afforded him by the policy of Ferdinand. His defeat had blighted his reviving fortunes, for the people considered him as inevitably doomed to misfortune. Still, while he lived, El Zagal knew he would be a rallying point for faction, and liable at any moment to be

* "Don Luis Osorio fue obispo de Jaen desde el año del 1483, y presidio in esta iglesia hasta el de 1496 in que murio en Flandes, a donde fue acompañando a la princesa Doña Juana, esposa del archiduque Don Felipe."—*España Sagrada*, por Fr. M. Risco, tom. 41, trat. 77, cap. 4.

elevated into power by the capricious multitude. He had recourse, therefore, to the most perfidious means to compass his destruction. He sent ambassadors to him, representing the necessity of concord for the salvation of the kingdom, and even offering to resign the title of king, and to become subject to his sway, on receiving some estate on which he could live in tranquil retirement. But while the ambassadors bore these words of peace, they were furnished with poisoned herbs, which they were to administer secretly to Boabdil; and if they failed in this attempt, they had pledged themselves to dispatch him openly, while engaged in conversation. They were instigated to this treason by promises of great reward, and by assurances from the alfaquis that Boabdil was an apostate, whose death would be acceptable to Heaven.

The young monarch was secretly apprised of the concerted treason, and refused an audience to the ambassadors. He denounced his uncle as the murderer of his father and his kindred, and the usurper of his throne; and vowed never to relent in hostility to him, until he should place his head on the walls of the Alhambra.

Open war again broke out between the two monarchs, though feebly carried on, in consequence of their mutual embarrassments. Ferdinand again extended his assistance to Boabdil, ordering the commanders of his fortresses to aid him in all enterprises against his uncle, and against such places as refused to acknowledge him as king; and Don Juan de Bonavides, who commanded in Lorca, even made inroads in his name, into the territories of Almeria, Baza, and Guadix, which owed allegiance to El Zagal.

The unfortunate Boabdil had three great evils to contend with—the inconstancy of his subjects, the hostility of his uncle, and the friendship of Ferdinand. The last was by far the most baneful: his fortunes withered under it. He was looked upon as the enemy of his faith and of his country. The cities shut their gates against him; the people cursed him; even the scanty band of cavaliers, who had hitherto followed his ill-starred banner, began to desert him; for he had not wherewithal to reward, or even to support them. His spirits sunk with his fortune, and he feared that in a little time he should not have a spot of earth whereon to plant his standard, nor an adherent to rally under it.

In the midst of his despondency, he received a message from his lion-hearted mother, the sultana Ayxa la Horra. “For

shame," said she, "to linger timorously about the borders of your kingdom, when a usurper is seated in your capital. Why look abroad for perfidious aid, when you have loyal hearts beating true to you in Granada? The Albaycin is ready to throw open its gates to receive you. Strike home vigorously—a sudden blow may mend all, or make an end. A throne or a grave!—for a king, there is no honorable medium."

Boabdil was of an undecided character, but there are circumstances which bring the most wavering to a decision, and when once resolved they are apt to act with a daring impulse unknown to steadier judgments. The message of the sultana roused him from a dream. Granada, beautiful Granada, with its stately Alhambra, its delicious gardens, its gushing and limpid fountains sparkling among groves of orange, citron, and myrtle, rose before him. "What have I done," exclaimed he, "that I should be an exile from this paradise of my forefathers—a wanderer and fugitive in my own kingdom, while a murderous usurper sits proudly upon my throne? Surely Allah will befriend the righteous cause; one blow, and all may be my own."

He summoned his scanty band of cavaliers. "Who is ready to follow his monarch unto the death?" said he: and every one laid his hand upon his scimitar. "Enough!" said he; "let each man arm himself and prepare his steed in secret, for an enterprise of toil and peril: if we succeed, our reward is empire."

[END OF VOL. ONE.]

A CHRONICLE OF THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

VOLUME SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

HOW BOABDIL RETURNED SECRETLY TO GRANADA, AND HOW HE
WAS RECEIVED.

"In the hand of God," exclaims an old Arabian chronicler, "is the destiny of princes; he alone giveth empire. A single Moorish horseman, mounted on a fleet Arabian steed, was one day traversing the mountains which extend between Granada and the frontier of Murcia. He galloped swiftly through the valleys, but paused and looked out cautiously from the summit of every height. A squadron of cavaliers followed warily at a distance. There were fifty lances. The richness of their armor and attire showed them to be warriors of noble rank, and their leader had a lofty and prince-like demeanor." The squadron thus described by the Arabian chronicler, was the Moorish king Boabdil and his devoted followers.

For two nights and a day they pursued their adventurous journey, avoiding all populous parts of the country, and choosing the most solitary passes of the mountains. They suffered severe hardships and fatigues, but they suffered without a murmur: they were accustomed to rugged campaigning, and their steeds were of generous and unyielding spirit. It was midnight, and all was dark and silent as they descended from the mountains, and approached the city of Granada. They passed along quietly under the shadow of its walls, until they arrived near the gate of the Albaycin. Here Boabdil ordered

his followers to halt, and remained concealed. Taking but four or five with him, he advanced resolutely to the gate, and knocked with the hilt of his scimitar. The guards demanded who sought to enter at that unseasonable hour. "Your king!" exclaimed Boabdil, "open the gate and admit him!"

The guards held forth a light, and recognized the person of the youthful monarch. They were struck with sudden awe, and threw open the gates; and Boabdil and his followers entered unmolested. They galloped to the dwellings of the principal inhabitants of the Albaycin, thundering at their portals, and summoning them to rise and take arms for their rightful sovereign. The summons was instantly obeyed: trumpets resounded throughout the streets—the gleam of torches and the flash of arms showed the Moors hurrying to their gathering places—and by daybreak, the whole force of the Albaycin was rallied under the standard of Boabdil. Such was the success of this sudden and desperate act of the young monarch; for we are assured by contemporary historians, that there had been no previous concert or arrangement. "As the guards opened the gates of the city to admit him," observes a pious chronicler, "so God opened the hearts of the Moors to receive him as their king."*

In the morning early, the tidings of this event roused El Zagal from his slumbers in the Alhambra. The fiery old warrior assembled his guard in haste, and made his way sword in hand to the Albaycin, hoping to come upon his nephew by surprise. He was vigorously met by Boabdil and his adherents, and driven back into the quarter of the Alhambra. An encounter took place between the two kings, in the square before the principal mosque; here they fought hand to hand with implacable fury, as though it had been agreed to decide their competition for the crown by single combat. In the tumult of this chance medley affray, however, they were separated, and the party of El Zagal was ultimately driven from the square.

The battle raged for some time in the streets and places of the city, but finding their powers of mischief cramped within such narrow limits, both parties sallied forth into the fields, and fought beneath the walls until evening. Many fell on both sides, and at night each party withdrew into its quarter, until the morning gave them light to renew the unnatural conflict.

* Puleon.

For several days, the two grand divisions of the city remained like hostile powers arrayed against each other. The party of the Alhambra was more numerous than that of the Albaycin, and contained most of the nobility and chivalry; but the adherents of Boabdil were men hardened and strengthened by labor and habitually skilled in the exercise of arms.

The Albaycin underwent a kind of siege by the forces of El Zagal; they effected breaches in the walls, and made repeated attempts to carry it sword in hand, but were as often repulsed. The troops of Boabdil, on the other hand, made frequent sallies; and in the conflicts which took place, the hatred of the combatants arose to such a pitch of fury, that no quarter was given on either side.

Boabdil perceived the inferiority of his force; he dreaded also that his adherents, being for the most part tradesmen and artisans, would become impatient of this interruption of their gainful occupations, and disheartened by these continual scenes of carnage. He sent missives, therefore, in all haste, to Don Fadrique de Toledo, who commanded the Christian forces on the frontier, entreating his assistance.

Don Fadrique had received instructions from the politic Ferdinand, to aid the youthful monarch in all his contests with his uncle. He advanced, therefore, with a body of troops near to Granada, but, wary lest some treachery might be intended, he stood for some time aloof, watching the movements of the parties. The furious and sanguinary nature of the conflicts which distracted unhappy Granada, soon convinced him that there was no collusion between the monarchs. He sent Boabdil, therefore, a reinforcement of Christian foot-soldiers and arquebusiers, under Fernan Alvarez de Sotomayer, alcaide of Colomera. This was as a firebrand thrown in to light up anew the flames of war in the city, which remained raging between the Moorish inhabitants for the space of fifty days.

CHAPTER II.

HOW KING FERDINAND LAID SIEGE TO VELEZ MALAGA.

HITHERTO, the events of this renowned war have been little else than a succession of brilliant but brief exploits, such as sudden forays and wild skirmishes among the mountains, or

the surprisals of castles, fortresses, and frontier towns. We approach now to more important and prolonged operations, in which ancient and mighty cities, the bulwarks of Granada, were invested by powerful armies, subdued by slow and regular sieges, and thus the capital left naked and alone.

The glorious triumphs of the Catholic sovereigns (says Fray Antonio Agapida) had resounded throughout the east, and filled all heathenness with alarm. The Grand-Turk Bajazet II. and his deadly foe, the grand sultan of Egypt, suspending for a time their bloody feuds, entered into a league to protect the religion of Mahomet and the kingdom of Granada from the hostilities of the Christians. It was concerted between them, that Bajazet should send a powerful armada against the island of Sicily, then appertaining to the Spanish crown, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the Castilian sovereigns; while, at the same time, great bodies of troops should be poured into Granada, from the opposite coast of Africa.

Ferdinand and Isabella received timely intelligence of these designs. They resolved at once to carry the war into the seaboard of Granada, to possess themselves of its ports, and thus, as it were, to bar the gates of the kingdom against all external aid. Malaga was to be the main object of attack: it was the principal seaport of the kingdom, and almost necessary to its existence. It had long been the seat of opulent commerce, sending many ships to the coasts of Syria and Egypt. It was also the great channel of communication with Africa, through which were introduced supplies of money, troops, arms, and steeds, from Tunis, Tripoli, Fez, Tremezan, and other Barbary powers. It was emphatically called, therefore, "the hand and mouth of Granada." Before laying siege to this redoubtable city, however, it was deemed necessary to secure the neighboring city of Velez Malaga and its dependent places, which might otherwise harass the besieging army.

For this important campaign, the nobles of the kingdom were again summoned to take the field with their forces, in the spring of 1487. The menaced invasion of the infidel powers of the east had awakened new ardor in the bosoms of all true Christian knights; and so zealously did they respond to the summons of the sovereigns, that an army of twenty thousand cavalry and fifty thousand foot, the flower of Spanish warriors, led by the bravest of Spanish cavaliers, thronged the renowned city of Cordova, at the appointed time.

On the night before this mighty host set forth upon its march,

an earthquake shook the city. The inhabitants, awakened by the shaking of the walls and rocking of the towers, fled to the courts and squares, fearing to be overwhelmed by the ruins of their dwellings. The earthquake was most violent in the quarter of the royal residence, the site of the ancient palace of the Moorish kings. Many looked upon this as an omen of some impending evil; but Fray Antonio Agapida, in that infallible spirit of divination which succeeds an event, plainly reads in it a presage that the entire empire of the Moors was about to be shaken to its centre.

It was on Saturday, the eve of the Sunday of Palms, (says a worthy and loyal chronicler of the time,) that the most Catholic monarch departed with his army, to render service to Heaven, and make war upon the Moors.* Heavy rains had swelled all the streams, and rendered the roads deep and difficult. The king, therefore, divided his host into two bodies. In one he put all the artillery, guarded by a strong body of horse, and commanded by the Master of Alcantara and Martin Alonzo, Senior of Montemayor. This division was to proceed by the road through the valleys, where pasturage abounded for the oxen which drew the ordnance.

The main body of the army was led by the king in person. It was divided into numerous battalions, each commanded by some distinguished cavalier. The king took the rough and perilous road of the mountains, and few mountains are more rugged and difficult than those of Andalusia. The roads are mere mule-paths, straggling amidst rocks and along the verge of precipices, clambering vast craggy heights, or descending into frightful chasms and ravines, with scanty and uncertain foothold for either man or steed. Four thousand pioneers were sent in advance, under the alcaide de los Donzeles, to conquer, in some degree, the asperities of the road. Some had pickaxes and crowbars to break the rocks, others had implements to construct bridges over the mountain torrents, while it was the duty of others to lay stepping-stones in the smaller streams. As the country was inhabited by fierce Moorish mountaineers, Don Diego de Castrillo was dispatched, with a body of horse and foot, to take possession of the heights and passes. Notwithstanding every precaution, the royal army suffered excessively on its march. At one time, there was no place to encamp, for five leagues of the most toilsome and

* Pulgar. *Cronica de los Reyes Catholicos.*

mountainous country; and many of the beasts of burden sunk down, and perished on the road.

It was with the greatest joy, therefore, that the royal army emerged from these stern and frightful defiles, and came to where they looked down upon the vega of Velez Malaga. The region before them was one of the most delectable to the eye that ever was ravaged by an army. Sheltered from every rude blast by a screen of mountains, and sloping and expanding to the south, this lovely valley was quickened by the most generous sunshine, watered by the silver meanderings of the Velez, and refreshed by cooling breezes from the Mediterranean. The sloping hills were covered with vineyards and olive-trees; the distant fields waved with grain, or were verdant with pasturage; while around the city were delightful gardens, the favorite retreats of the Moors, where their white pavilions gleamed among groves of oranges, citrons, and pomegranates, and were surmounted by stately palms—those plants of southern growth, bespeaking a generous climate and a cloudless sky.

In the upper part of this delightful valley, the city of Velez Malaga reared its warrior battlements in stern contrast to the landscape. It was built on the declivity of a steep and insulated hill, and strongly fortified by wall and towers. The crest of the hill rose high above the town, into a mere crag, inaccessible on every other side, and crowned by a powerful castle, which domineered over the surrounding country. Two suburbs swept down into the valley, from the skirts of the town, and were defended by bulwarks and deep ditches. The vast ranges of gray mountains, often capped with clouds, which rose to the north, were inhabited by a hardy and warlike race, whose strong fortresses of Comares, Camillas, Competa, and Benemarhorga, frowned down from cragged heights.

At the time that the Christian host arrived in sight of this valley, a squadron was hovering on the smooth sea before it, displaying the banner of Castile. This was commanded by the count of Trevento, and consisted of four armed galleys, conveying a number of caravels, laden with supplies for the army.

After surveying the ground, king Ferdinand encamped on the side of a mountain which advanced close to the city, and which was the last of a rugged sierra, or chain of heights, that extended quite to Granada. On the summit of this mountain, and overlooking the camp, was a Moorish town, powerfully

fortified, called Bentomiz, and which, from its vicinity, had been considered capable of yielding great assistance to Velez Malaga. Several of the generals remonstrated with the king, for choosing a post so exposed to assaults from the mountaineers. Ferdinand replied, that he should thus cut off all communication between the town and the city; and that as to the danger, his soldiers must keep the more vigilant guard against surprise.

King Ferdinand rode forth, attended by several cavaliers and a small number of cuirassiers, appointing the various stations of the camp. While a body of foot-soldiers were taking possession, as an advanced guard, of an important height which overlooked the city, the king retired to a tent to take refreshment. While at table, he was startled by a sudden uproar, and, looking forth, beheld his soldiers flying before a superior force of the enemy. The king had on no other armor but a cuirass; seizing a lance, however, he sprang upon his horse and galloped to protect the fugitives, followed by his handful of knights and cuirassiers. When the Spaniards saw the king hastening to their aid, they turned upon their pursuers. Ferdinand, in his eagerness, threw himself into the midst of the foe. One of his grooms was killed beside him; but, before the Moor who slew him could escape, the king transfixed him with his lance. He then sought to draw his sword, which hung at his saddle-bow—but in vain. Never had he been exposed to such peril;—he was surrounded by the enemy, without a weapon wherewith to defend himself.

In this moment of awful jeopardy, the marques of Cadiz, the count de Cabra, the adelantado of Murcia, with two other cavaliers, named Garcilasso de la Vega and Diego de Atayde, came galloping to the scene of action, and, surrounding the king, made a loyal rampart of their bodies against the assaults of the Moors. The horse of the marques was pierced by an arrow, and that worthy cavalier exposed to imminent danger; but, with the aid of his valorous companions, he quickly put the enemy to flight, and pursued them, with slaughter, to the very gates of the city.

When those loyal warriors returned from the pursuit, they remonstrated with the king for exposing his life in personal conflict, seeing that he had so many valiant captains whose business it was to fight. They reminded him that the life of a prince was the life of his people, and that many a brave army was lost by the loss of its commander. They entreated him,

therefore, in future, to protect them with the force of his mind in the cabinet, rather than of his arm in the field.

Ferdinand acknowledged the wisdom of their advice, but declared that he could not see his people in peril without venturing his person to assist them:—a reply (say the old chroniclers) which delighted the whole army, inasmuch as they saw that he not only governed them as a good king, but protected them as a valiant captain. Ferdinand, however, was conscious of the extreme peril to which he had been exposed, and made a vow never again to venture into battle without having his sword girt to his side.*

When this achievement of the king was related to Isabella, she trembled amidst her joy at his safety; and afterwards, in memorial of the event, she granted to Velez Malaga, as the arms of the city, the figure of the king on horseback, with a groom lying dead at his feet, and the Moors flying.†

The camp was formed, but the artillery was yet on the road, advancing with infinite labor, at the rate of merely a league a day; for heavy rains had converted the streams of the valleys into raging torrents, and completely broken up the roads. In the mean time, king Ferdinand ordered an assault on the suburbs of the city. They were carried, after a sanguinary conflict of six hours, in which many Christian cavaliers were killed and wounded, and, among the latter, Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the duke of Braganza. The suburbs were then fortified towards the city, with trenches and palisades, and garrisoned by a chosen force, under Don Fadrique de Toledo. Other trenches were dugged round the city, and from the suburbs to the royal camp, so as to cut off all communication with the surrounding country.

Bodies of troops were also sent to take possession of the mountain passes, by which the supplies for the army had to be brought. The mountains, however, were so steep and rugged, and so full of defiles and lurking-places, that the Moors could sally forth and retreat in perfect security; frequently swooping down upon Christian convoys, and bearing off both booty and prisoners to their strong-holds. Sometimes the Moors would light fires at night, on the sides of the mountains, which would be answered by fires from the watch-towers and fortresses. By these signals, they would concert assaults upon the Christian camp, which, in consequence, was

* Illerças, Hist. Pontif. lib. 6, c. 20. Wedmar, Hist. Velez Malaga.

† Idem.

obliged to be continually on the alert, and ready to fly to arms.

King Ferdinand flattered himself that the manifestation of his force had struck sufficient terror into the city, and that by offers of clemency it might be induced to capitulate. He wrote a letter, therefore, to the commanders, promising, in case of immediate surrender, that all the inhabitants should be permitted to depart with their effects; but threatening them with fire and sword, if they persisted in defence. This letter was dispatched by a cavalier named Carvagal, who, putting it on the end of a lance, gave it to the Moors who were on the walls of the city. The commanders replied, that the king was too noble and magnanimous to put such a threat in execution, and that they should not surrender, as they knew the artillery could not be brought to the camp, and they were promised succor by the king of Granada.

At the same time that he received this reply, the king learnt that at the strong town of Comares, upon a height about two leagues distant from the camp, a large number of warriors had assembled from the Axarquía, the same mountains in which the Christian cavaliers had been massacred in the beginning of the war; others were daily expected, for this rugged sierra was capable of furnishing fifteen thousand fighting men.

King Ferdinand felt that his army, thus disjointed, and inclosed in an enemy's country, was in a perilous situation, and that the utmost discipline and vigilance were necessary. He put the camp under the strictest regulations, forbidding all gaming, blasphemy, or brawl, and expelling all loose women and their attendant bully ruffians, the usual fomenters of riot and contention among soldiery. He ordered that none should sally forth to skirmish, without permission from their commanders; that none should set fire to the woods on the neighboring mountains; and that all word of security given to Moorish places or individuals, should be inviolably observed. These regulations were enforced by severe penalties, and had such salutary effect, that, though a vast host of various people was collected together, not an opprobrious epithet was heard, nor a weapon drawn in quarrel.

In the mean time, the cloud of war went on, gathering about the summits of the mountains; multitudes of the fierce warriors of the sierra descended to the lower heights of Bentomiz, which overhung the camp, intending to force their way to the city. A detachment was sent against them, which, after sharp

fighting, drove them to the higher cliffs of the mountain, where it was impossible to pursue them.

Ten days had elapsed since the encampment of the army, yet still the artillery had not arrived. The lombards and other heavy ordnance were left in despair, at Antiquera; the rest came groaning slowly through the narrow valleys, which were filled with long trains of artillery, and cars laden with munitions. At length part of the smaller ordnance arrived within half a league of the camp, and the Christians were animated with the hopes of soon being able to make a regular attack upon the fortifications of the city.

CHAPTER III.

HOW KING FERDINAND AND HIS ARMY WERE EXPOSED TO IMMINENT PERIL BEFORE VELEZ MALAGA.

WHILE the standard of the cross waved on the hills before Velez Malaga, and every height and cliff bristled with hostile arms, the civil war between the factions of the Alhambra and the Albaycin, or rather between El Zagal and El Chico, continued to convulse the city of Granada. The tidings of the investment of Velez Malaga at length roused the attention of the old men and the alfaquis, whose heads were not heated by the daily broils. They spread themselves through the city, and endeavored to arouse the people to a sense of their common danger.

"Why," said they, "continue these brawls between brethren and kindred? what battles are these, where even triumph is ignominious, and the victor blushes and conceals his scars? Behold the Christians ravaging the land won by the valor and blood of your forefathers; dwelling in the houses they have built, sitting under the trees they have planted, while your brethren wander about, houseless and desolate. Do you wish to seek your real foe?—he is encamped on the mountain of Bentomiz. Do you want a field for the display of your valor?—you will find it before the walls of Velez Malaga."

When they had roused the spirit of the people, they made their way to the rival kings, and addressed them with like remonstrances. Hamet Aben Zarrax, the inspired santón, reproached El Zagal with his blind and senseless ambition:

"You are striving to be king," said he, bitterly, "yet suffer the kingdom to be lost!"

El Zagal found himself in a perplexing dilemma. He had a double war to wage,—with the enemy without, and the enemy within. Should the Christians gain possession of the sea-coast, it would be ruinous to the kingdom; should he leave Granada to oppose them, his vacant throne might be seized on by his nephew. He made a merit of necessity, and, pretending to yield to the remonstrances of the alfaquis, endeavored to compromise with Boabdil. He expressed deep concern at the daily losses of the country, caused by the dissensions of the capital; an opportunity now presented to retrieve all by a blow. The Christians had in a manner put themselves in a tomb between the mountains—nothing remained but to throw the earth upon them. He offered to resign the title of king, to submit to the government of his nephew, and fight under his standard; all he desired was to hasten to the relief of Velez Malaga, and to take full vengeance on the Christians.

Boabdil spurned his proposition, as the artifice of a hypocrite and a traitor. "How shall I trust a man," said he, "who has murdered my father and my kindred by treachery, and has repeatedly sought my own life, both by violence and stratagem?"

El Zagal boiled with rage and vexation—but there was no time to be lost. He was beset by the alfaquis and the nobles of his court; the youthful cavaliers were hot for action, the common people loud in their complaints that the richest cities were abandoned to the mercy of the enemy. The old warrior was naturally fond of fighting; he saw also that to remain inactive would endanger both crown and kingdom, whereas a successful blow would secure his popularity in Granada. He had a much more powerful force than his nephew, having lately received reinforcements from Baza, Guadix, and Almeria; he could march with a large force, therefore, to the relief of Velez Malaga, and yet leave a strong garrison in the Alhambra. He took his measures accordingly, and departed suddenly in the night, at the head of one thousand horse and twenty thousand foot. He took the most unfrequented roads, along the chain of mountains extending from Granada to the height of Bentomiz, and proceeded with such rapidity as to arrive there before king Ferdinand had notice of his approach.

The Christians were alarmed one evening by the sudden blazing of great fires on the mountains about the fortress of

Bentomiz. By the ruddy light, they beheld the flash of weapons and the array of troops, and they heard the distant sound of Moorish drums and trumpets. The fires of Bentomiz were answered by fires on the towers of Velez Malaga. The shouts of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" echoed along the cliffs, and resounded from the city; and the Christians found that the old warrior king of Granada was on the mountain above their camp.

The spirits of the Moors were suddenly raised to a pitch of the greatest exultation, while the Christians were astonished to see this storm of war ready to burst upon their heads. The count de Cabra, with his accustomed eagerness when there was a king in the field, would fain have scaled the heights, and attacked El Zagal before he had time to form his camp; but Ferdinand, who was more cool and wary, restrained him. To attack the height, would be to abandon the siege. He ordered every one, therefore, to keep vigilant watch at his post, and to stand ready to defend it to the utmost, but on no account to sally forth and attack the enemy.

All night the signal-fires kept blazing along the mountains, rousing and animating the whole country. The morning sun rose over the lofty summit of Bentomiz on a scene of martial splendor. As its rays glanced down the mountain, they lighted up the white tents of the Christian cavaliers, cresting its lower prominences, their pennons and ensigns fluttering in the morning breeze. The sumptuous pavilions of the king, with the holy standard of the cross and the royal banners of Castile and Arragon, dominated the encampment. Beyond lay the city, its lofty castle and numerous towers glistening with arms; while above all, and just on the profile of the height, in the full blaze of the rising sun, were descried the tents of the Moor, his turbaned troops clustering about them, and his infidel banners floating against the sky. Columns of smoke rose where the night-fires had blazed, and the clash of the Moorish cymbal, the bray of trumpet, and the neigh of steed, were faintly heard from the airy heights. So pure and transparent is the atmosphere in this region, that every object can be distinctly seen at a great distance; and the Christians were able to behold the formidable hosts of foes that were gathering on the summits of the surrounding mountains.

One of the first measures of the Moorish king, was to detach a large force, under Rodovan de Vanegas, alcaide of Granada, to fall upon the convoy of ordnance, which stretched, for a

great distance, through the mountain defiles. Ferdinand had anticipated this attempt, and sent the commander of Leon, with a body of horse and foot, to reinforce the Master of Alcantara. El Zagal, from his mountain height, beheld the detachment issue from the camp, and immediately recalled Rodovan de Vanegas. The armies now remained quiet for a time, the Moor looking grimly down upon the Christian camp, like a tiger meditating a bound upon his prey. The Christians were in fearful jeopardy—a hostile city below them, a powerful army above them, and on every side mountains filled with implacable foes.

After El Zagal had maturely considered the situation of the Christian camp, and informed himself of all the passes of the mountain, he conceived a plan to surprise the enemy, which he flattered himself would insure their ruin, and perhaps the capture of king Ferdinand. He wrote a letter to the alcaide of the city, commanding him, in the dead of the night, on a signal-fire being made from the mountain, to sally forth with all his troops, and fall furiously upon the Christian camp. The king would, at the same time, rush down with his army from the mountain, and assail it at the opposite side; thus overwhelming it, at the hour of deep repose. This letter he dispatched by a renegade Christian, who knew all the secret roads of the country, and, if taken, could pass himself for a Christian who had escaped from captivity.

The fierce El Zagal, confident in his stratagem, looked down upon the Christians as his devoted victims. As the sun went down, and the long shadows of the mountains stretched across the vega, he pointed with exultation to the camp below, apparently unconscious of the impending danger. "Allah Achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great! Behold, the unbelievers are delivered into our hands; their king and choicest chivalry will soon be at our mercy. Now is the time to show the courage of men, and, by one glorious victory, retrieve all that we have lost. Happy he who falls fighting in the cause of the Prophet! he will at once be transported to the paradise of the faithful, and surrounded by immortal houris. Happy he who shall survive victorious! He will behold Granada,—an earthly paradise!—once more delivered from its foes, and restored to all its glory." The words of El Zagal were received with acclamations by his troops, who waited impatiently for the appointed hour, to pour down from their mountain-hold upon the Christians.

CHAPTER IV.

RESULT OF THE STRATAGEM OF EL ZAGAL TO SURPRISE KING FERDINAND.

QUEEN ISABELLA and her court had remained at Cordova, in great anxiety for the result of the royal expedition. Every day brought tidings of the difficulties which attended the transportation of the ordnance and munitions, and of the critical state of the army.

While in this state of anxious suspense, couriers arrived with all speed from the frontiers, bringing tidings of the sudden sally of El Zagal from Granada, to surprise the camp. All Cordova was in consternation. The destruction of the Andalusian chivalry, among the mountains of this very neighborhood, was called to mind; it was feared that similar ruin was about to burst forth, from rocks and precipices, upon Ferdinand and his army.

Queen Isabella shared in the public alarm, but it served to rouse all the energies of her heroic mind. Instead of uttering idle apprehensions, she sought only how to avert the danger. She called upon all the men of Andalusia, under the age of seventy, to arm and hasten to the relief of their sovereign; and she prepared to set out with the first levies. The grand cardinal of Spain, old Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, in whom the piety of the saint and the wisdom of the counsellor were mingled with the fire of the cavalier, offered high pay to all horsemen who would follow him to aid their king and the Christian cause; and, buckling on armor, prepared to lead them to the scene of danger.

The summons of the queen roused the quick Andalusian spirit. Warriors who had long since given up fighting, and had sent their sons to battle, now seized the sword and lance that were rusting on the wall, and marshalled forth their gray-headed domestics and their grandchildren for the field. The great dread was, that all aid would arrive too late: El Zagal and his host had passed like a storm through the mountains, and it was feared the tempest had already burst upon the Christian camp.

In the mean time, the night had closed which had been appointed by El Zagal for the execution of his plan. He had

watched the last light of day expire, and all the Spanish camp remained tranquil. As the hours wore away, the camp-fires were gradually extinguished. No drum or trumpet sounded from below. Nothing was heard, but now and then the dull heavy tread of troops, or the echoing tramp of horses—the usual patrols of the camp, and the changes of the guards. El Zagal restrained his own impatience, and that of his troops, until the night should be advanced, and the camp sunk in that heavy sleep from which men are with difficulty awakened; and, when awakened, so prone to be bewildered and dismayed.

At length, the appointed hour arrived. By order of the Moorish king, a bright flame sprung up from the height of Bentomiz; but El Zagal looked in vain for the responding light from the city. His impatience would brook no longer delay; he ordered the advance of the army to descend the mountain defile and attack the camp. The defile was narrow, and overhung by rocks: as the troops proceeded, they came suddenly, in a shadowy hollow, upon a dark mass of Christian warriors. A loud shout burst forth, and the Christians rushed to assail them; the Moors, surprised and disconcerted, retreated in confusion to the height. When El Zagal heard there was a Christian force posted in the defile, he doubted some counter-plan of the enemy. He gave orders to light the mountain fires. On a signal given, bright flames sprung out on every height, from great pyres of wood, prepared for the purpose: cliff blazed out after cliff, until the whole atmosphere was in a glow of furnace light. The ruddy glare lit up the glens and passes of the mountain, and fell strongly upon the Christian camp, revealing all its tents and every post and bulwark. Wherever El Zagal turned his eyes, he beheld the light of his fires flashed back from cuirass, and helm, and sparkling lance; he beheld a grove of spears planted in every pass, every assailable point bristling with arms, and squadrons of horse and foot in battle array, awaiting his attack.

In fact, the letter of El Zagal to the alcaide of Velez Malaga had been intercepted by the vigilant Ferdinand; the renegado messenger hanged; and secret measures taken, after the night had closed in, to give the enemy a warm reception. El Zagal saw that his plan of surprise was discovered and foiled; furious with disappointment, he ordered his troops forward to the attack. They rushed down the defile, but were again encountered by the mass of Christian warriors, being the advance guard of the army, commanded by Don Hurtado de Mendoza,

brother of the grand cardinal. The Moors were again repulsed, and retreated up the height. Don Hurtado would have followed them, but the ascent was steep and rugged, and easily defended by the Moors. A sharp action was kept up, through the night, with cross-bows, darts, and arquebusses. The cliffs echoed with deafening uproar, while the fires blazing upon the mountains threw a lurid and uncertain light upon the scene.

When the day dawned, and the Moors saw that there was no co-operation from the city, they began to slacken in their ardor: they beheld also every pass of the mountain filled with Christian troops, and began to apprehend an assault in return. Just then king Ferdinand sent the marques of Cadiz, with horse and foot, to seize upon a height occupied by a battalion of the enemy. The marques assailed the Moors with his usual intrepidity, and soon put them to flight. The others, who were above, seeing their comrades flying, were seized with a sudden alarm: they threw down their arms, and retreated. One of those unaccountable panics, which now and then seize upon great bodies of people, and to which the light-spirited Moors were very prone, now spread throughout the camp. They were terrified, they knew not why, or at what. They threw away swords, lances, breast-plates, cross-bows, every thing that could burthen or impede their flight; and, spreading themselves wildly over the mountains, fled headlong down the defiles. They fled without pursuers—from the glimpse of each other's arms, from the sound of each other's footsteps. Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcaide of Granada, alone succeeded in collecting a body of the fugitives; he made a circuit with them through the passes of the mountain, and forcing his way across a weak part of the Christian lines, galloped towards Velez Malaga. The rest of the Moorish host was completely scattered. In vain did El Zagal and his knights attempt to rally them; they were left almost alone, and had to consult their own security by flight.

The marques of Cadiz, finding no opposition, ascended from height to height, cautiously reconnoitring, and fearful of some stratagem or ambush. All, however, was quiet. He reached with his men the place which the Moorish army had occupied: the heights were abandoned, and strewed with cuirasses, scimitars, cross-bows, and other weapons. His force was too small to pursue the enemy, but returned to the royal camp laden with the spoils.

King Ferdinand, at first, could not credit so signal and miraculous a defeat: he suspected some lurking stratagem. He ordered, therefore, that a strict watch should be maintained throughout the camp, and every one be ready for instant action. The following night, a thousand cavaliers and hidalgos kept guard about the royal tent, as they had done for several preceding nights; nor did the king relax this vigilance, until he received certain intelligence that the enemy was completely scattered and El Zagal flying in confusion.

The tidings of this rout, and of the safety of the Christian army, arrived at Cordova just as reinforcements were on the point of setting out. The anxiety and alarm of the queen and the public were turned to transports of joy and gratitude. The forces were disbanded, solemn processions were made, and *te deums* chanted in the churches, for so signal a victory.

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE PEOPLE OF GRANADA REWARDED THE VALOR OF EL ZAGAL.

THE daring spirit of the old warrior, Muley Abdallah El Zagal, in sallying forth to defend his territories, while he left an armed rival in his capital, had struck the people of Granada with admiration. They recalled his former exploits, and again anticipated some hardy achievement from his furious valor. Couriers from the army reported its formidable position on the height of Bentomiz. For a time, there was a pause in the bloody commotions of the city; all attention was turned to the blow about to be struck at the Christian camp. The same considerations which diffused anxiety and terror through Cordova, swelled every bosom with exulting confidence in Granada. The Moors expected to hear of another massacre, like that in the mountains of Malaga. "El Zagal has again entrapped the enemy!" was the cry. "The power of the unbelievers is about to be struck to the heart. We shall soon see the Christian king led captive to the capital." Thus the name of El Zagal was on every tongue. He was extolled as the saviour of the country; the only one worthy of wearing the Moorish crown. Boabdil was reviled as basely remaining

passive while his country was invaded; and so violent became the clamor of the populace, that his adherents trembled for his safety.

While the people of Granada were impatiently looking out for tidings of the anticipated victory, scattered horsemen came spurring across the vega. They were fugitives from the Moorish army and brought the first incoherent account of its defeat. Every one who attempted to tell the tale of this unaccountable panic and dispersion, was as if bewildered by the broken recollection of some frightful dream. He knew not how or why it came to pass. He talked of a battle in the night, among rocks and precipices, by the glare of bale-fires; of multitudes of armed foes in every pass, seen by gleams and flashes; of the sudden horror that seized upon the army at daybreak; its headlong flight, and total dispersion. Hour after hour, the arrival of other fugitives confirmed the story of ruin and disgrace.

In proportion to their recent vaunting, was the humiliation that now fell upon the people of Granada. There was a universal burst, not of grief, but indignation. They confounded the leader with the army—the deserted, with those who had abandoned him; and El Zagal, from being their idol, became suddenly the object of their execration. He had sacrificed the army; he had disgraced the nation; he had betrayed the country. He was a dastard, a traitor; he was unworthy to reign!

On a sudden, one among the multitude shouted, “Long live Boabdil el Chico!” the cry was echoed on all sides, and every one shouted, “Long live Boabdil el Chico! long live the legitimate king of Granada: and death to all usurpers!” In the excitement of the moment, they thronged to the Albaycin; and those who had lately besieged Boabdil with arms, now surrounded his palace with acclamations. The keys of the city, and of all the fortresses, were laid at his feet; he was borne in state to the Alhambra, and once more seated, with all due ceremony, on the throne of his ancestors.

Boabdil had by this time become so accustomed to be crowned and uncrowned by the multitude, that he put no great faith in the duration of their loyalty. He knew that he was surrounded by hollow hearts, and that most of the courtiers of the Alhambra were secretly devoted to his uncle. He ascended the throne as the rightful sovereign, who had been dispossessed of it by usurpation; and he ordered the heads of four of the principal nobles to be struck off who had

been most zealous in support of the usurper. Executions of the kind were matters of course, on any change of Moorish government; and Boabdil was lauded for his moderation and humanity, in being content with so small a sacrifice. The factions were awed into obedience; the populace, delighted with any change, extolled Boabdil to the skies; and the name of Muley Abdallah El Zagal was for a time a by-word of scorn and opprobrium throughout the city.

Never was any commander more astonished and confounded by a sudden reverse of fortune, than El Zagal. The evening had seen him with a powerful army at his command, his enemy within his grasp, and victory about to cover him with glory, and to consolidate his power:—the morning beheld him a fugitive among the mountains, his army, his prosperity, his power, all dispelled, he knew not how—gone like a dream of the night. In vain had he tried to stem the headlong flight of the army. He saw his squadrons breaking and dispersing among the cliffs of the mountains, until, of all his host, only a handful of cavaliers remained faithful to him. With these he made a gloomy retreat towards Granada, but with a heart full of foreboding. When he drew near to the city, he paused on the banks of the Xenel, and sent forth scouts to collect intelligence. They returned with dejected countenances: “The gates of Granada,” said they, “are closed against you. The banner of Boabdil floats on the tower of the Alhambra.”

El Zagal turned his steed, and departed in silence. He retreated to the town of Almunecar, and from thence to Almeria, which places still remained faithful to him. Restless and uneasy at being so distant from the capital, he again changed his abode, and repaired to the city of Guadix, within a few leagues of Granada. Here he remained, endeavoring to rally his forces, and preparing to avail himself of any sudden change in the fluctuating politics of the metropolis.

CHAPTER VI.

SURRENDER OF VELEZ MALAGA AND OTHER PLACES.

THE people of Velez Malaga had beheld the camp of Muley Abdallah El Zagal, covering the summit of Bentomiz, and glittering in the last rays of the setting sun. During the night, they

had been alarmed and perplexed by signal-fires on the mountain, and by the sound of distant battle. When the morning broke, the Moorish army had vanished as if by enchantment. While the inhabitants were lost in wonder and conjecture, a body of cavalry, the fragment of the army saved by Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcaide of Granada, came galloping to the gates. The tidings of the strange discomfiture of the host, filled the city with consternation; but Rodovan exhorted the people to continue their resistance. He was devoted to El Zagal, and confident in his skill and prowess; and felt assured that he would soon collect his scattered forces, and return with fresh troops from Granada. The people were comforted by the words, and encouraged by the presence, of Rodovan; and they had still a lingering hope that the heavy artillery of the Christians might be locked up in the impassable defiles of the mountains. This hope was soon at an end. The very next day, they beheld long laborious lines of ordnance slowly moving into the Spanish camp, lombards, ribadoquines, catapultas, and cars laden with munitions,—while the escort, under the brave Master of Alcantara, wheeled in great battalions into the camp, to augment the force of the besiegers.

The intelligence that Granada had shut its gates against El Zagal, and that no reinforcements were to be expected, completed the despair of the inhabitants; even Rodovan himself lost confidence, and advised capitulation.

The terms were arranged between the alcaide and the noble count de Cifuentes; the latter had been prisoner of Rodovan at Granada, who had treated him with chivalrous courtesy. They had conceived a mutual esteem for each other, and met as ancient friends.

Ferdinand granted favorable conditions, for he was eager to proceed against Malaga. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with their effects, except their arms, and to reside, if they chose it, in Spain, in any place distant from the sea. One hundred and twenty Christians, of both sexes, were rescued from captivity by the surrender of Velez Malaga, and were sent to Cordova, where they were received with great tenderness by the queen and her daughter the Infanta Isabella, in the famous cathedral, in the midst of public rejoicings for the victory.

The capture of Velez Malaga was followed by the surrender of Bentomiz, Comares, and all the towns and fortresses of the Axarquía, which were strongly garrisoned, and discreet and

valiant cavaliers appointed as their alcaides. The inhabitants of nearly forty towns of the Alpaxarra mountains, also, sent deputations to the Castilian sovereigns, taking the oath of allegiance as Mudehars, or Moslem vassals.

About the same time came letters from Boabdil el Chico, announcing to the sovereigns the revolution of Granada in his favor. He solicited kindness and protection for the inhabitants who had returned to their allegiance, and for those of all other places which should renounce adherence to his uncle. By this means (he observed) the whole kingdom of Granada would soon be induced to acknowledge his sway, and would be held by him in faithful vassalage to the Castilian crown.

The Catholic sovereigns complied with his request. Protection was immediately extended to the inhabitants of Granada, permitting them to cultivate their fields in peace, and to trade with the Christian territories in all articles excepting arms; being provided with letters of surety, from some Christian captain or alcaide. The same favor was promised to all other places, which, within six months, should renounce El Zagal and come under allegiance to the younger king. Should they not do so within that time, the sovereigns threatened to make war upon them, and conquer them for themselves. This measure had a great effect, in inducing many to return to the standard of Boabdil.

Having made every necessary arrangement for the government and security of the newly conquered territory, Ferdinand turned his attention to the great object of his campaign, the reduction of Malaga.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE CITY OF MALAGA, AND ITS INHABITANTS.

THE city of Malaga lies in the lap of a fertile valley, surrounded by mountains, excepting on the part which lies open to the sea. As it was one of the most important, so it was one of the strongest, cities of the Moorish kingdom. It was fortified by walls of prodigious strength, studded with a great number of huge towers. On the land side, it was protected by a natural barrier of mountains; and on the other, the

waves of the Mediterranean beat against the foundations of its massive bulwarks.

At one end of the city, near the sea, on a high mound, stood the Alcazaba or citadel,—a fortress of great strength. Immediately above this, rose a steep and rocky mount, on the top of which, in old times, had been a Pharo or light-house, from which the height derived its name of Gibralfaro.* It was at present crowned by an immense castle, which, from its lofty and cragged situation, its vast walls and mighty towers, was deemed impregnable. It communicated with the Alcazaba by a covered way, six paces broad, leading down between two walls, along the profile or ridge of the rock. The castle of Gibralfaro commanded both citadel and city, and was capable, if both were taken, of maintaining a siege. Two large suburbs adjoined the city: in the one towards the sea, were the dwelling-houses of the most opulent inhabitants, adorned with hanging gardens; the other, on the land side, was thickly peopled, and surrounded by strong walls and towers.

Malaga possessed a brave and numerous garrison, and the common people were active, hardy, and resolute; but the city was rich and commercial, and under the habitual control of numerous opulent merchants, who dreaded the ruinous consequences of a siege. They were little zealous for the warlike renown of their city, and longed rather to participate in the enviable security of property, and the lucrative privileges of safe traffic with the Christian territories, granted to all places which declared for Boabdil. At the head of these gainful citizens was Ali Dordux, a mighty merchant of uncounted wealth, whose ships traded to every part of the Levant, and whose word was as a law in Malaga. Ali Dordux assembled the most opulent and important of his commercial brethren, and they repaired in a body to the Alcazaba, where they were received by the alcajde, Albozen Connixa, with that deference generally shown to men of their great local dignity and power of purse. Ali Dordux was ample and stately in his form, and fluent and emphatic in his discourse; his eloquence had an effect therefore upon the alcajde, as he represented the hopelessness of a defence of Malaga, the misery that must attend a siege, and the ruin that must follow a capture by force of arms. On the other hand, he set forth the grace that might be obtained from the Castilian sovereigns, by an early and

* A corruption of *Gibel-faro*; the hill of the light-house.

voluntary acknowledgment of Boabdil as king; the peaceful possession of their property, and the profitable commerce with the Christian ports, that would be allowed them. He was seconded by his weighty and important coadjutors; and the alcaide, accustomed to regard them as the arbiters of the affairs of the place, yielded to their united counsels. He departed, therefore, with all speed, to the Christian camp, empowered to arrange a capitulation with the Castilian monarch; and in the mean time, his brother remained in command of the Alcazaba.

There was at this time, as alcaide, in the old crag-built castle of Gibralfaro, a warlike and fiery Moor, an implacable enemy of the Christians. This was no other than Hamet Zeli, surnamed El Zegri, the once formidable alcaide of Ronda, and the terror of its mountains. He had never forgiven the capture of his favorite fortress, and panted for vengeance on the Christians. Notwithstanding his reverses, he had retained the favor of El Zagal, who knew how to appreciate a bold warrior of the kind, and had placed him in command of this important fortress of Gibralfaro.

Hamet el Zegri had gathered round him the remnant of his band of Gomeres, with others of the same tribe. These fierce warriors were nestled, like so many war-hawks, about their lofty cliff. They looked down with martial contempt upon the commercial city of Malaga, which they were placed to protect; or rather, they esteemed it only for its military importance, and its capability of defence. They held no communion with its trading, gainful inhabitants, and even considered the garrison of the Alcazaba as their inferiors. War was their pursuit and fashion; they rejoiced in its turbulent and perilous scenes; and, confident in the strength of the city, and, above all, of their castle, they set at defiance the menace of Christian invasion. There were among them, also, many apostate Moors, who had once embraced Christianity, but had since recanted, and had fled from the vengeance of the Inquisition. These were desperadoes, who had no mercy to expect, should they again fall into the hands of the enemy.

Such were the fierce elements of the garrison of Gibralfaro; and its rage may easily be conceived, at hearing that Malaga was to be given up without a blow; that they were to sink into Christian vassals, under the intermediate sway of Boabdil el Chico; and that the alcaide of the Alcazaba had departed, to arrange the terms of capitulation.

Hamet el Zegri determined to avert, by desperate means, the

threatened degradation. He knew that there was a large party in the city faithful to El Zagal, being composed of warlike men, who had taken refuge from the various mountain towns which had been captured: their feelings were desperate as their fortunes, and, like Hamet, they panted for revenge upon the Christians. With these he had a secret conference, and received assurances of their adherence to him in any measures of defence. As to the counsel of the peaceful inhabitants, he considered it unworthy the consideration of a soldier; and he spurned at the interference of the wealthy merchant Ali Dordux, in matters of warfare.

"Still," said Hamet el Zegri, "let us proceed regularly." So he descended with his Gomeres to the citadel, entered it suddenly, put to death the brother of the alcaide, and such of the garrison as made any demur, and then summoned the principal inhabitants of Malaga, to deliberate on measures for the welfare of the city.* The wealthy merchants again mounted to the citadel, excepting Ali Dordux, who refused to obey the summons. They entered with hearts filled with awe, for they found Hamet surrounded by his grim African guard, and all the stern array of military power, and they beheld the bloody traces of the recent massacre.

Hamet el Zegri rolled a dark and searching eye upon the assembly. "Who," said he, "is loyal and devoted to Muley Abdallah el Zagal?" Every one present asserted his loyalty. "Good!" said Hamet; "and who is ready to prove his devotion to his sovereign, by defending this his important city to the last extremity?" Every one present declared his readiness. "Enough!" observed Hamet; "the alcaide Albozen Connixa has proved himself a traitor to his sovereign, and to you all; for he has conspired to deliver the place to the Christians. It behoves you to choose some other commander capable of defending your city against the approaching enemy." The assembly declared unanimously, that there was no one so worthy of the command as himself. So Hamet el Zegri was appointed alcaide of Malaga, and immediately proceeded to man the forts and towers with his partisans, and to make every preparation for a desperate resistance.

Intelligence of these occurrences put an end to the negotiations between king Ferdinand and the superseded alcaide Albozen Connixa, and it was supposed there was no alternative

* *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 82.

but to lay siege to the place. The marques of Cadiz, however, found at Velez a Moorish cavalier of some note, a native of Malaga, who offered to tamper with Hamet el Zegri for the surrender of the city, or at least of the castle of Gibralfaro. The marques communicated this to the king: "I put this business, and the key of my treasury, into your hands," said Ferdinand; "act, stipulate, and disburse, in my name, as you think proper."

The marques armed the Moor with his own lance, cuirass, and target, and mounted him on one of his own horses. He equipped in similar style, also, another Moor, his companion and relation. They bore secret letters to Hamet from the marques, offering him the town of Coin in perpetual inheritance, and four thousand doblas in gold, if he would deliver up Gibralfaro; together with large sums, to be distributed among his officers and soldiers: and he offered unlimited rewards for the surrender of the city.*

Hamet had a warrior's admiration of the marques of Cadiz, and received his messengers with courtesy in his fortress of Gibralfaro. He even listened to their propositions with patience, and dismissed them in safety, though with an absolute refusal. The marques thought his reply was not so peremptory as to discourage another effort. The emissaries were dispatched, therefore, a second time, with further propositions. They approached Malaga in the night, but found the guards doubled, patrols abroad, and the whole place on the alert. They were discovered, pursued, and only saved themselves by the fleetness of their steeds, and their knowledge of the passes of the mountains.

Finding all attempts to tamper with the faith of Hamet el Zegri utterly futile, king Ferdinand publicly summoned the city to surrender, offering the most favorable terms in case of immediate compliance; but threatening captivity to all the inhabitants, in case of resistance.

The message was delivered in presence of the principal inhabitants, who, however, were too much in awe of the stern alcaide to utter a word. Hamet el Zegri then rose haughtily, and replied, that the city of Malaga had not been confided to him to be surrendered, but defended; and the king should witness how he acquitted himself of his charge.†

The messengers returned with formidable accounts of the

* *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 82.

† *Pulgar*, part 3, cap. 74.

force of the garrison, the strength of the fortifications, and the determined spirit of the commander and his men. The king immediately sent orders to have the heavy artillery forwarded from Antiquera; and, on the 7th of May, marched with his army towards Malaga.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADVANCE OF KING FERDINAND AGAINST MALAGA.

THE army of Ferdinand advanced in lengthened line, glittering along the foot of the mountains which border the Mediterranean; while a fleet of vessels, freighted with heavy artillery and warlike munitions, kept pace with it at a short distance from the land, covering the sea with a thousand gleaming sails. When Hamet el Zegri saw this force approaching, he set fire to the houses of the suburbs which adjoined the walls, and sent forth three battalions to encounter the advance guard of the enemy.

The Christian army drew near to the city, at that end where the castle and rocky height of Gibralfaro defend the sea-board. Immediately opposite, at about two bow-shots' distance, stood the castle; and between it and the high chain of mountains, was a steep and rocky hill, commanding a pass through which the Christians must march to penetrate to the vega and surround the city. Hamet el Zegri ordered the three battalions to take their stations, one on this hill, another in the pass near the castle, and a third on the side of the mountain near the sea.

A body of Spanish foot-soldiers, of the advance guard, sturdy mountaineers of Galicia, sprang forward to climb the side of the height next the sea; at the same time, a number of cavaliers and hidalgos of the royal household attacked the Moors who guarded the pass below. The Moors defended their posts with obstinate valor. The Gallicians were repeatedly overpowered and driven down the hill, but as often rallied, and being reinforced by the hidalgos and cavaliers, returned to the assault. This obstinate struggle lasted for six hours: the strife was of a deadly kind, not merely with cross-bows and arquebusses, but hand to hand, with swords and daggers; no quarter

was claimed or given, on either side—they fought not to make captives, but to slay. It was but the advance of the Christian army that was engaged; so narrow was the pass along the coast, that the army could proceed only in file: horse and foot, and beasts of burden, were crowded one upon another, impeding each other, and blocking up the narrow and rugged defile. The soldiers heard the uproar of the battle, the sound of trumpets, and the war-cries of the Moors—but tried in vain to press forward to the assistance of their companions.

At length a body of foot-soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood climbed, with great difficulty, the steep side of the mountain which overhung the pass, and advanced with seven banners displayed. The Moors, seeing this force above them, abandoned the pass in despair. The battle was still raging on the height; the Gallicians, though supported by Castilian troops under Don Hurtado de Mendoza and Garcilasso de la Vega, were severely pressed and roughly handled by the Moors; at length a brave standard-bearer, Luys Mazedo by name, threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and planted his banner on the summit. The Gallicians and Castilians, stimulated by this noble self-devotion, followed him, fighting desperately, and the Moors were at length driven to their castle of Gibralfaro.*

This important height being taken, the pass lay open to the army; but by this time evening was advancing, and the host was too weary and exhausted to seek proper situations for the encampment. The king, attended by several grandees and cavaliers, went the rounds at night, stationing outposts towards the city, and guards and patrols to give the alarm on the least movement of the enemy. All night the Christians lay upon their arms, lest there should be some attempt to sally forth and attack them.

When the morning dawned, the king gazed with admiration at this city, which he hoped soon to add to his dominions. It was surrounded on one side by vineyards, gardens, and orchards, which covered the hills with verdure; on the other side, its walls were bathed by the smooth and tranquil sea. Its vast and lofty towers and prodigious castles, hoary with age, yet unimpaired in strength, showed the labors of magnanimous men in former times to protect their favorite abode. Hanging gardens, groves of oranges, citrons, and pome-

* Pulgar. Cronica.

granates, with tall cedars and stately palms, were mingled with the stern battlements and towers—bespeaking the opulence and luxury that reigned within.

In the mean time, the Christian army poured through the pass, and, throwing out its columns and extending its lines, took possession of every vantage-ground around the city. King Ferdinand surveyed the ground, and appointed the stations of the different commanders.

The important mount which had cost so violent a struggle, and faced the powerful fortress of Gibralfaro, was given in charge to Roderigo Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, who, in all sieges, claimed the post of danger. He had several noble cavaliers with their retainers in his encampment, which consisted of fifteen hundred horse and fourteen thousand foot; and extended from the summit of the mount to the margin of the sea, completely blocking up the approach to the city on that side. From this post, a line of encampments extended quite round the city to the seaboard, fortified by bulwarks and deep ditches; while a fleet of armed ships and galleys stretched before the harbor; so that the place was completely invested, by sea and land. The various parts of the valley now resounded with the din of preparation, and were filled with artificers preparing warlike engines and munitions: armorers and smiths, with glowing forges and deafening hammers; carpenters and engineers, constructing machines wherewith to assail the walls; stone-cutters, shaping stone balls for the ordnance; and burners of charcoal, preparing fuel for the furnaces and forges.

When the encampment was formed, the heavy ordnance was landed from the ships, and mounted in various parts of the camp. Five huge lombards were placed on the mount commanded by the marques of Cadiz, so as to bear upon the castle of Gibralfaro.

The Moors made strenuous efforts to impede these preparations. They kept up a heavy fire from their ordnance, upon the men employed in digging trenches or constructing batteries, so that the latter had to work principally in the night. The royal tents had been stationed conspicuously, and within reach of the Moorish batteries; but were so warmly assailed, that they had to be removed behind a hill.

When the works were completed, the Christian batteries opened in return, and kept up a tremendous cannonade; while the fleet, approaching the land, assailed the city vigorously on the opposite side.

“It was a glorious and delectable sight,” observes Fray Antonio Agapida, “to behold this infidel city thus surrounded by sea and land, by a mighty Christian force. Every mound in its circuit was, as it were, a little city of tents, bearing the standard of some renowned Catholic warrior. Beside the warlike ships and galleys which lay before the place, the sea was covered with innumerable sails, passing and repassing, appearing and disappearing, being engaged in bringing supplies for the subsistence of the army. It seemed a vast spectacle contrived to recreate the eye, did not the volleying bursts of flame and smoke from the ships, which seemed to lie asleep on the quiet sea, and the thunder of ordnance from camp and city, from tower and battlement, tell the deadly warfare that was raging.

“At night, the scene was far more direful than in the day. The cheerful light of the sun was gone; there was nothing but the flashes of artillery, or the baleful gleams of combustibles thrown into the city, and the conflagration of the houses. The fire kept up from the Christian batteries was incessant; there were seven great lombards in particular, called The Seven Sisters of Ximenes, which did tremendous execution. The Moorish ordnance replied in thunder from the walls; Gibralfaro was wrapped in volumes of smoke, rolling about its base; and Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeres looked out with triumph upon the tempest of war they had awakened. Truly they were so many demons incarnate,” continues the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, “who were permitted by Heaven to enter into and possess this infidel city, for its perdition.”

CHAPTER IX.

SIEGE OF MALAGA.

THE attack on Malaga, by sea and land, was kept up for several days with tremendous violence, but without producing any great impression, so strong were the ancient bulwarks of the city. The count de Cifuentes was the first to signalize himself by any noted achievement. A main tower of the suburb had been shattered by the ordnance, and the battlements demolished, so as to yield no shelter to its defenders. Seeing this, the count assembled a gallant band of cavaliers of the royal

household, and advanced to take it by storm. They applied scaling-ladders, and mounted, sword in hand. The Moors, having no longer battlements to protect them, descended to a lower floor, and made furious resistance from the windows and loopholes. They poured down boiling pitch and rosin, and hurled stones and darts and arrows on the assailants. Many of the Christians were slain, their ladders were destroyed by flaming combustibles, and the count was obliged to retreat from before the tower. On the following day he renewed the attack with superior force, and, after a severe combat, succeeded in planting his victorious banner on the tower.

The Moors now assailed the tower in their turn. They undermined the part towards the city, placed props of wood under the foundation, and, setting fire to them, drew off to a distance. In a little while the props gave way, the foundation sunk, and the tower was rent; part of its wall fell, with a tremendous noise; many of the Christians were thrown out headlong, and the rest were laid open to the missiles of the enemy.

By this time, however, a breach had been made in the wall adjoining the tower, and troops poured in to the assistance of their comrades. A continued battle was kept up, for two days and a night, by reinforcements from camp and city. The parties fought backwards and forwards through the breach of the wall, with alternate success; and the vicinity of the tower was strewn with the dead and wounded. At length the Moors gradually gave way, disputing every inch of ground, until they were driven into the city; and the Christians remained masters of the greater part of the suburb.

This partial success, though gained with great toil and bloodshed, gave temporary animation to the Christians; they soon found, however, that the attack on the main works of the city was a much more arduous task. The garrison contained veterans who had served in many of the towns captured by the Christians. They were no longer confounded and dismayed by the battering ordnance and other strange engines of foreign invention, and had become expert in parrying their effects, in repairing breaches, and erecting counter-works.

The Christians, accustomed of late to speedy conquests of Moorish fortresses, became impatient of the slow progress of the siege. Many were apprehensive of a scarcity of provisions, from the difficulty of subsisting so numerous a host in the heart of the enemy's country, where it was necessary to transport supplies across rugged and hostile mountains, or subjected to

the uncertainties of the sea. Many also were alarmed at a pestilence which broke out in the neighboring villages; and some were so overcome by these apprehensions, as to abandon the camp and return to their homes.

Several of the loose and worthless hangers-on that infest all great armies, hearing these murmurs, thought that the siege would soon be raised, and deserted to the enemy, hoping to make their fortunes. They gave exaggerated accounts of the alarms and discontents of the army, and represented the troops as daily returning home in bands. Above all, they declared that the gunpowder was nearly exhausted, so that the artillery would soon be useless. They assured the Moors, therefore, that if they persisted a little longer in their defence, the king would be obliged to draw off his forces and abandon the siege.

The reports of these renegadoes gave fresh courage to the garrison; they made vigorous sallies upon the camp, harassing it by night and day, and obliging every part to be guarded with the most painful vigilance. They fortified the weak parts of their walls with ditches and palisadoes, and gave every manifestation of a determined and unyielding spirit.

Ferdinand soon received intelligence of the reports which had been carried to the Moors; he understood that they had been informed, likewise, that the queen was alarmed for the safety of the camp, and had written repeatedly urging him to abandon the siege. As the best means of disproving all these falsehoods, and of destroying the vain hopes of the enemy, Ferdinand wrote to the queen, entreating her to come and take up her residence in the camp.

CHAPTER X.

SIEGE OF MALAGA CONTINUED--OBSTINACY OF HAMET EL ZEGRI.

GREAT was the enthusiasm of the army, when they beheld their patriot queen advancing in state, to share the toils and dangers of her people. Isabella entered the camp, attended by the dignitaries and the whole retinue of her court, to manifest that this was no temporary visit. On one side of her was her daughter, the Infanta; on the other, the grand cardinal of Spain, Hernando de Talavera, the prior of Prado, confessor to

the queen, followed with a great train of prelates, courtiers, cavaliers, and ladies of distinction. The cavalcade moved in calm and stately order through the camp, softening the iron aspect of war by this array of courtly grace and female beauty.

Isabella had commanded, that on her coming to the camp, the horrors of war should be suspended, and fresh offers of peace made to the enemy. On her arrival, therefore, there had been a general cessation of firing throughout the camp. A messenger was, at the same time, dispatched to the besieged, informing them of her being in the camp, and of the determination of the sovereigns to make it their settled residence until the city should be taken. The same terms were offered, in case of immediate surrender, that had been granted to Velez Malaga; but the inhabitants were threatened with captivity and the sword, should they persist in their defence.

Hamet el Zegri received this message with haughty contempt, and dismissed the messenger without deigning a reply. "The Christian sovereigns," said he, "have made this offer in consequence of their despair. The silence of their batteries proves the truth of what has been told us, that their powder is exhausted. They have no longer the means of demolishing our walls; and if they remain much longer, the autumnal rains will interrupt their convoys, and fill their camp with famine and disease. The first storm will disperse their fleet, which has no neighboring port of shelter: Africa will then be open to us, to procure reinforcements and supplies."

The words of Hamet el Zegri were hailed as oracular, by his adherents. Many of the peaceful part of the community, however, ventured to remonstrate, and to implore him to accept the proffered mercy. The stern Hamet silenced them with a terrific threat: he declared, that whoever should talk of capitulating, or should hold any communication with the Christians, should be put to death. The fierce Gomeres, like true men of the sword, acted upon the menace of their chieftain as upon a written law, and having detected several of the inhabitants in secret correspondence with the enemy, they set upon and slew them, and then confiscated their effects. This struck such terror into the citizens, that those who had been loudest in their murmurs became suddenly mute, and were remarked as evincing the greatest bustle and alacrity in the defence of the city.

When the messenger returned to the camp, and reported the contemptuous reception of the royal message, king Ferdinand was exceedingly indignant. Finding the cessation of firing, on

the queen's arrival, had encouraged a belief among the enemy that there was a scarcity of powder in the camp, he ordered a general discharge from all the batteries. The sudden burst of war from every quarter soon convinced the Moors of their error, and completed the confusion of the citizens, who knew not which most to dread, their assailants or their defenders, the Christians or the Gomeres.

That evening the sovereigns visited the encampment of the marques of Cadiz, which commanded a view over a great part of the city and the camp. The tent of the marques was of great magnitude, furnished with hangings of rich brocade and French cloth of the rarest texture. It was in the oriental style; and, as it crowned the height, with the surrounding tents of other cavaliers, all sumptuously furnished, presented a gay and silken contrast to the opposite towers of Gibralfaro. Here a splendid collation was served up to the sovereigns; and the courtly revel that prevailed in this chivalrous encampment, the glitter of pageantry, and the bursts of festive music, made more striking the gloom and silence that reigned over the Moorish castle.

The marques of Cadiz, while it was yet light, conducted his royal visitors to every point that commanded a view of the warlike scene below. He caused the heavy lombards also to be discharged, that the queen and ladies of the court might witness the effect of those tremendous engines. The fair dames were filled with awe and admiration, as the mountain shook beneath their feet with the thunder of the artillery, and they beheld great fragments of the Moorish walls tumbling down the rocks and precipices.

While the good marques was displaying these things to his royal guests, he lifted up his eyes, and to his astonishment beheld his own banner hanging out from the nearest tower of Gibralfaro. The blood mantled in his cheek, for it was a banner which he had lost at the time of the memorable massacre of the heights of Malaga.* To make this taunt more evident, several of the Gomeres displayed themselves upon the battlements, arrayed in the helmets and cuirasses of some of the cavaliers slain or captured on that occasion. The marques of Cadiz restrained his indignation, and held his peace; but several of his cavaliers vowed loudly to revenge this cruel bravado, on the ferocious garrison of Gibralfaro.

* Diego de Valera. Cronica, MS.

CHAPTER XL.

ATTACK OF THE MARQUES OF CADIZ UPON GIBRALFARO.

THE marques of Cadiz was not a cavalier that readily forgave an injury or an insult. On the morning after the royal banquet, his batteries opened a tremendous fire upon Gibralfaro. All day, the encampment was wrapped in wreaths of smoke; nor did the assault cease with the day—but, throughout the night, there was an incessant flashing and thundering of the lombards, and, the following morning, the assault rather increased than slackened in fury. The Moorish bulwarks were no proof against those formidable engines. In a few days, the lofty tower on which the taunting banner had been displayed, was shattered; a smaller tower in its vicinity reduced to ruins, and a great breach made in the intervening walls.

Several of the hot-spirited cavaliers were eager for storming the breach, sword in hand; others, more cool and wary, pointed out the rashness of such an attempt; for the Moors had worked indefatigably in the night; they had digged a deep ditch within the breach, and had fortified it with palisadoes and a high breastwork. All, however, agreed that the camp might safely be advanced near to the ruined walls, and that it ought to be done so, in return for the insolent defiance of the enemy.

The marques of Cadiz felt the temerity of the measure, but he was unwilling to dampen the zeal of these high-spirited cavaliers; and having chosen the post of danger in the camp, it did not become him to decline any service, merely because it might appear perilous. He ordered his outposts, therefore, to be advanced within a stone's-throw of the breach, but exhorted the soldiers to maintain the utmost vigilance.

The thunder of the batteries had ceased; the troops, exhausted by two nights' fatigue and watchfulness, and apprehending no danger from the dismantled walls, were half of them asleep; the rest were scattered about in negligent security. On a sudden, upwards of two thousand Moors sallied forth from the castle, led on by Alrahan Zenete, the principal captain under Hamet. They fell with fearful havoc upon the advanced guard, slaying many of them in their sleep, and putting the rest to headlong flight.

The marques was in his tent, about a bow-shot distance,

when he heard the tumult of the onset, and beheld his men flying in confusion. He rushed forth, followed by his standard-bearer. "Turn again, cavaliers!" exclaimed he; "I am here, Ponce de Leon! to the foe! to the foe!" The flying troops stopped at hearing his well-known voice, rallied under his banner, and turned upon the enemy. The encampment, by this time, was roused; several cavaliers from the adjoining stations had hastened to the scene of action, with a number of Galicians and soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood. An obstinate and bloody contest ensued; the ruggedness of the place, the rocks, chasms, and declivities, broke it into numerous combats: Christian and Moor fought hand to hand, with swords and daggers; and often, grappling and struggling, rolled together down the precipices.

The banner of the marques was in danger of being taken: he hastened to its rescue, followed by some of his bravest cavaliers. They were surrounded by the enemy, and several of them cut down. Don Diego Ponce de Leon, brother to the marques, was wounded by an arrow; and his son-in-law, Luis Ponce, was likewise wounded: they succeeded, however, in rescuing the banner, and bearing it off in safety. The battle lasted for an hour; the height was covered with killed and wounded, and the blood flowed in streams down the rocks; at length, Alrahan Zenete being disabled by the thrust of a lance, the Moors gave way and retreated to the castle.

They now opened a galling fire from their battlements and towers, approaching the breaches so as to discharge their cross-bows and arquebusses into the advanced guard of the encampment. The marques was singled out; the shot fell thick about him, and one passed through his buckler, and struck upon his cuirass, but without doing him any injury. Every one now saw the danger and inutility of approaching the camp thus near to the castle; and those who had counselled it, were now urgent that it should be withdrawn. It was accordingly removed back to its original ground, from which the marques had most reluctantly advanced it. Nothing but his valor and timely aid had prevented this attack on his outpost from ending in a total rout of all that part of the army.

Many cavaliers of distinction fell in this contest; but the loss of none was felt more deeply than that of Ortega de Prado, captain of escaladors. He was one of the bravest men in the service; the same who had devised the first successful blow of the war, the storming of Alhama, where he was the first to

plant and mount the scaling-ladders. He had always been high in the favor and confidence of the noble Ponce de Leon, who knew how to appreciate and avail himself of the merits of all able and valiant men.*

CHAPTER XII.

SIEGE OF MALAGA CONTINUED—STRATAGEMS OF VARIOUS KINDS.

GREAT were the exertions now made, both by the besiegers and the besieged, to carry on this contest with the utmost vigor. Hamet el Zegri went the rounds of the walls and towers, doubling the guards, and putting every thing in the best posture of defence. The garrison was divided into parties of a hundred, to each of which a captain was appointed. Some were to patrol, others to sally forth and skirmish with the enemy, and others to hold themselves armed and in reserve. Six albatozas, or floating batteries, were manned and armed with pieces of artillery, to attack the fleet.

On the other hand, the Castilian sovereigns kept open a communication by sea with various parts of Spain, from which they received provisions of all kinds; they ordered supplies of powder also from Valencia, Barcelona, Sicily, and Portugal. They made great preparations also for storming the city. Towers of wood were constructed, to move on wheels, each capable of holding one hundred men; they were furnished with ladders, to be thrown from their summits to the tops of the walls; and within those ladders, others were encased, to be let down for the descent of the troops into the city. There were gallipagos or tortoises, also, being great wooden shields, covered with hides, to protect the assailants, and those who undermined the walls.

Secret mines were commenced in various places; some were intended to reach to the foundations of the walls, which were to be propped up with wood, ready to be set on fire; others were to pass under the walls, and remain ready to be broken open so as to give entrance to the besiegers. At these mines the army worked day and night; and during these secret preparations, the ordnance kept up a fire upon the city, to divert the attention of the besieged.

* Zurita. Mariana. Abarca.

In the mean time, Hamet el Zegri displayed wonderful vigor and ingenuity in defending the city, and in repairing or fortifying, by deep ditches, the breaches made by the enemy. He noted, also, every place where the camp might be assailed with advantage, and gave the besieging army no repose night or day. While his troops sallied on the land, his floating batteries attacked the besiegers on the sea; so that there was incessant skirmishing. The tents called the Queen's Hospital were crowded with wounded, and the whole army suffered from constant watchfulness and fatigue. To guard against the sudden assaults of the Moors, the trenches were deepened, and palisadoes erected in front of the camp; and in that part facing Gibralfaro, where the rocky heights did not admit of such defences, a high rampart of earth was thrown up. The cavaliers Garcilasso de la Vega, Juan de Zuñiga, and Diego de Atayde, were appointed to go the rounds, and keep vigilant watch that these fortifications were maintained in good order.

In a little while, Hamet discovered the mines secretly commenced by the Christians: he immediately ordered countermines. The soldiers mutually worked until they met, and fought hand to hand, in these subterranean passages. The Christians were driven out of one of their mines; fire was set to the wooden framework, and the mine destroyed. Encouraged by this success, the Moors attempted a general attack upon the camp, the mines, and the besieging fleet. The battle lasted for six hours, on land and water, above and below ground, on bulwark, and in trench and mine; the Moors displayed wonderful intrepidity, but were finally repulsed at all points, and obliged to retire into the city, where they were closely invested, without the means of receiving any assistance from abroad.

The horrors of famine were now added to the other miseries of Malaga. Hamet el Zegri, with the spirit of a man bred up to war, considered every thing as subservient to the wants of the soldier, and ordered all the grain in the city to be gathered and garnered up for the sole use of those who fought. Even this was dealt out sparingly, and each soldier received four ounces of bread in the morning, and two in the evening, for his daily allowance.

The wealthy inhabitants, and all those peacefully inclined, mourned over a resistance which brought destruction upon their houses, death into their families, and which they saw must end in their ruin and captivity: still none of them dared

to speak openly of capitulation, or even to manifest their grief, lest they should awaken the wrath of their fierce defenders. They surrounded their civic champion, Ali Dordux, the great and opulent merchant, who had buckled on shield and cuirass, and taken spear in hand, for the defence of his native city, and, with a large body of the braver citizens, had charge of one of the gates and a considerable portion of the walls. Drawing Ali Dordux aside, they poured forth their griefs to him in secret. "Why," said they, "should we suffer our native city to be made a mere bulwark and fighting-place for foreign barbarians and desperate men? They have no families to care for, no property to lose, no love for the soil, and no value for their lives. They fight to gratify a thirst for blood or a desire for revenge, and will fight on until Malaga becomes a ruin and its people slaves. Let us think and act for ourselves, our wives, and our children. Let us make private terms with the Christians before it is too late, and save ourselves from destruction."

The bowels of Ali Dordux yearned towards his fellow-citizens; he bethought him also of the sweet security of peace, and the bloodless yet gratifying triumphs of gainful traffic. The idea also of a secret negotiation or bargain with the Castilian sovereigns, for the redemption of his native city, was more conformable to his accustomed habits than this violent appeal to arms; for though he had for a time assumed the warrior, he had not forgotten the merchant. Ali Dordux communed, therefore, with the citizen-soldiers under his command, and they readily conformed to his opinion. Concerting together, they wrote a proposition to the Castilian sovereigns, offering to admit the army into the part of the city intrusted to their care, on receiving assurance of protection for the lives and properties of the inhabitants. This writing they delivered to a trusty emissary to take to the Christian camp, appointing the hour and place of his return, that they might be ready to admit him unperceived.

The Moor made his way in safety to the camp, and was admitted to the presence of the sovereigns. Eager to gain the city without further cost of blood or treasure, they gave a written promise to grant the conditions; and the Moor set out joyfully on his return. As he approached the walls where Ali Dordux and his confederates were waiting to receive him, he was descried by a patrolling band of Gomeres, and considered a spy coming from the camp of the besiegers. They issued forth and seized him, in sight of his employers, who gave them-

selves up for lost. The Gomeres had conducted him nearly to the gate, when he escaped from their grasp and fled. They endeavored to overtake him, but were encumbered with armor; he was lightly clad, and fled for his life. One of the Gomeres paused, and, levelling his cross-bow, let fly a bolt, which pierced the fugitive between the shoulders; he fell, and was nearly within their grasp, but rose again, and with a desperate effort attained the Christian camp. The Gomeres gave over the pursuit, and the citizens returned thanks to Allah for their deliverance from this fearful peril. As to the faithful messenger, he died of his wound shortly after reaching the camp, consoled with the idea that he had preserved the secret and the lives of his employers.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE OF MALAGA.

THE sufferings of Malaga spread sorrow and anxiety among the Moors; and they dreaded lest this beautiful city, once the bulwark of the kingdom, should fall into the hands of the unbelievers. The old warrior king, Abdallah el Zagal, was still sheltered in Guadix, where he was slowly gathering together his shattered forces. When the people of Guadix heard of the danger and distress of Malaga, they urged to be led to its relief; and the alfaquis admonished El Zagal not to desert so righteous and loyal a city, in its extremity. His own warlike nature made him feel a sympathy for a place that made so gallant a resistance; and he dispatched as powerful a reinforcement as he could spare, under conduct of a chosen captain, with orders to throw themselves into the city.

Intelligence of this reinforcement reached Boabdil el Chico, in his royal palace of the Alhambra. Filled with hostility against his uncle, and desirous of proving his loyalty to the Castilian sovereigns, he immediately sent forth a superior force of horse and foot, under an able commander, to intercept the detachment. A sharp conflict ensued; the troops of El Zagal were routed with great loss, and fled back in confusion to Guadix.

Boabdil, not being accustomed to victories, was flushed with his melancholy triumph. He sent tidings of it to the Castilian sovereigns, accompanied with rich silks, boxes of Arabian per-

fume, a cup of gold, richly wrought, and a female captive of Ubeda, as presents to the queen; and four Arabian steeds magnificently caparisoned, a sword and dagger richly mounted, and several albornozes and other robes sumptuously embroidered, for the king. He entreated them at the same time, always to look upon him with favor as their devoted vassal.

Boabdil was fated to be unfortunate even in his victories. His defeat of the forces of his uncle, destined to the relief of unhappy Malaga, shocked the feelings and cooled the loyalty of many of his best adherents. The mere men of traffic might rejoice in their golden interval of peace; but the chivalrous spirits of Granada spurned a security purchased by such sacrifices of pride and affection. The people at large, having gratified their love of change, began to question whether they had acted generously by their old fighting monarch. "El Zagal," said they, "was fierce and bloody, but then he was true to his country; he was an usurper, it is true, but then he maintained the glory of the crown which he usurped. If his sceptre was a rod of iron to his subjects, it was a sword of steel against their enemies. This Boabdil sacrifices religion, friends, country, every thing, to a mere shadow of royalty, and is content to hold a rush for a sceptre."

These factious murmurs soon reached the ears of Boabdil, and he apprehended another of his customary reverses. He sent in all haste to the Castilian sovereigns, beseeching military aid to keep him on his throne. Ferdinand graciously complied with a request so much in unison with his policy. A detachment of one thousand cavalry, and two thousand infantry, was sent, under the command of Don Fernandez Gonsalvo of Cordova, subsequently renowned as the great captain. With this succor, Boabdil expelled from the city all those who were hostile to him, and in favor of his uncle. He felt secure in these troops, from their being distinct in manners, language, and religion, from his subjects; and compromised with his pride, in thus exhibiting that most unnatural and humiliating of all regal spectacles, a monarch supported on his throne by foreign weapons, and by soldiers hostile to his people.

Nor was Boabdil ^{el} Chico the only Moorish sovereign that sought protection from Ferdinand and Isabella. A splendid galley, with latine sails, and several banks of oars, displaying the standard of the crescent, but likewise a white flag in sign of amity, came one day into the harbor. An ambassador landed from it, within the Christian lines. He came from the

king of Tremezan, and brought presents similar to those of Boabdil, consisting of Arabian coursers, with bits, stirrups, and other furniture of gold, together with costly Moorish mantles: for the queen, there were sumptuous shawls, robes, and silken stuffs, ornaments of gold, and exquisite oriental perfumes.

The king of Tremezan had been alarmed at the rapid conquests of the Spanish arms, and startled by the descent of several Spanish cruisers on the coast of Africa. He craved to be considered a vassal to the Castilian sovereigns, and that they would extend such favor and security to his ships and subjects as had been shown to other Moors who had submitted to their sway. He requested a painting of their arms, that he and his subjects might recognize and respect their standard, whenever they encountered it. At the same time he implored their clemency towards unhappy Malaga, and that its inhabitants might experience the same favor that had been shown towards the Moors of other captured cities.

The embassy was graciously received by the Christian sovereigns. They granted the protection required; ordering their commanders to respect the flag of Tremezan, unless it should be found rendering assistance to the enemy. They sent also to the Barbary monarch their royal arms, moulded in escutcheons of gold, a hand's-breadth in size.*

While thus the chances of assistance from without daily decreased, famine raged in the city. The inhabitants were compelled to eat the flesh of horses, and many died of hunger. What made the sufferings of the citizens the more intolerable, was, to behold the sea covered with ships, daily arriving with provisions for the besiegers. Day after day, also, they saw herds of fat cattle, and flocks of sheep, driven into the camp. Wheat and flour were piled in huge mounds in the centre of the encampments, glaring in the sunshine, and tantalizing the wretched citizens, who, while they and their children were perishing with hunger, beheld prodigal abundance reigning within a bow-shot of their walls.

* *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 84. *Pulgar*, part 3, c. 86.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW A MOORISH SANTON UNDERTOOK TO DELIVER THE CITY OF MALAGA FROM THE POWER OF ITS ENEMIES.

THERE lived at this time, in a hamlet in the neighborhood of Guadix, an ancient Moor, of the name of Abrahin Algerbi. He was a native of Guerba, in the kingdom of Tunis, and had for several years led the life of a santón or hermit. The hot sun of Africa had dried his blood, and rendered him of an exalted yet melancholy temperament. He passed most of his time in meditation, prayer, and rigorous abstinence, until his body was wasted and his mind bewildered, and he fancied himself favored with divine revelations. The Moors, who have a great reverence for all enthusiasts of the kind, looked upon him as inspired, listened to all his ravings as veritable prophecies, and denominated him *el santo*, or the saint.

The woes of the kingdom of Granada had long exasperated the gloomy spirit of this man, and he had beheld with indignation this beautiful country wrested from the dominion of the faithful, and becoming a prey to the unbelievers. He had implored the blessings of Allah on the troops which issued forth from Guadix for the relief of Malaga; but when he saw them return, routed and scattered by their own countrymen, he retired to his cell, shut himself up from the world, and plunged for a time in the blackest melancholy.

On a sudden, he made his appearance again in the streets of Guadix, his face haggard, his form emaciated, but his eye beaming with fire. He said that Allah had sent an angel to him in the solitude of his cell, revealing to him a mode of delivering Malaga from its perils, and striking horror and confusion into the camp of the unbelievers. The Moors listened with eager credulity to his words: four hundred of them offered to follow him even to the death, and to obey implicitly his commands. Of this number many were Gomeres, anxious to relieve their countrymen, who formed part of the garrison of Malaga.

They traversed the kingdom by the wild and lonely passes of the mountains, concealing themselves in the day and travelling only in the night, to elude the Christian scouts. At length they arrived at the mountains which tower above Malaga, and,

looking down, beheld the city completely invested; a chain of encampments extending round it from shore to shore, and a line of ships blockading it by sea; while the continual thunder of artillery, and the smoke rising in various parts, showed that the siege was pressed with great activity. The hermit scanned the encampments warily, from his lofty height. He saw that the part of the encampment of the marques of Cadiz which was at the foot of the height, and on the margin of the sea, was most assailable, the rocky soil not admitting ditches or palisadoes. Remaining concealed all day, he descended with his followers at night to the sea-coast, and approached silently to the outworks. He had given them their instructions; they were to rush suddenly upon the camp, fight their way through, and throw themselves into the city.

It was just at the gray of the dawning, when objects are obscurely visible, that they made this desperate attempt. Some sprang suddenly upon the sentinels, others rushed into the sea and got round the works, others clambered over the breastworks. There was sharp skirmishing; a great part of the Moors were cut to pieces, but about two hundred succeeded in getting into the gates of Malaga.

The santón took no part in the conflict, nor did he endeavor to enter the city. His plans were of a different nature. Drawing apart from the battle, he threw himself on his knees on a rising ground, and, lifting his hands to Heaven, appeared to be absorbed in prayer. The Christians, as they were searching for fugitives in the clefts of the rocks, found him at his devotions. He stirred not at their approach, but remained fixed as a statue, without changing color or moving a muscle. Filled with surprise not unmingled with awe, they took him to the marques of Cadiz. He was wrapped in a coarse albornoz, or Moorish mantle; his beard was long and grizzled, and there was something wild and melancholy in his look, that inspired curiosity. On being examined, he gave himself out as a saint to whom Allah had revealed the events that were to take place in that siege. The marques demanded when and how Malaga was to be taken. He replied that he knew full well, but he was forbidden to reveal those important secrets except to the king and queen. The good marques was not more given to superstitious fancies than other commanders of his time, yet there seemed something singular and mysterious about this man; he might have some important intelligence to communicate; so he was persuaded to send him to the king

and queen. He was conducted to the royal tent, surrounded by a curious multitude, exclaiming "*El Moro Santo!*" for the news had spread through the camp, that they had taken a Moorish prophet.

The king, having dined, was taking his siesta, or afternoon's sleep, in his tent; and the queen, though curious to see this singular man, yet, from a natural delicacy and reserve, delayed until the king should be present. He was taken therefore to an adjoining tent, in which were Doña Beatrix de Bovadilla, marchioness of Moya, and Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the duke of Braganza, with two or three attendants. The Moor, ignorant of the Spanish tongue, had not understood the conversation of the guards, and supposed, from the magnificence of the furniture and the silken hangings, that this was the royal tent. From the respect paid by the attendants to Don Alvaro and the marchioness, he concluded that they were the king and queen.

He now asked for a draught of water; a jar was brought to him, and the guard released his arm to enable him to drink. The marchioness perceived a sudden change in his countenance, and something sinister in the expression of his eye, and shifted her position to a more remote part of the tent. Pretending to raise the water to his lips, the Moor unfolded his albornoze, so as to grasp a scimitar which he wore concealed beneath; then, dashing down the jar, he drew his weapon, and gave Don Alvaro a blow on the head, that struck him to the earth, and nearly deprived him of life. Turning then upon the marchioness, he made a violent blow at her; but in his eagerness and agitation, his scimitar caught in the drapery of the tent; the force of the blow was broken, and the weapon struck harmless upon some golden ornaments of her head-dress.*

Ruy Lopez de Toledo, treasurer to the queen, and Juan de Belalcazar, a sturdy friar, who were present, grappled and struggled with the desperado; and immediately the guards, who had conducted him from the marques de Cadiz, fell upon him and cut him to pieces.†

The king and queen, brought out of their tents by the noise, were filled with horror when they learned the imminent peril from which they had escaped. The mangled body of the Moor was taken by the people to the camp, and thrown into the city from a catapult. The Gomeres gathered up the body with deep

* Pietro Martyr, Epist. 62.

† Cura de los Palacios.

reverence, as the remains of a saint; they washed and perfumed it, and buried it with great honor and loud lamentations. In revenge of his death, they slew one of their principal Christian captives, and, having tied his body upon an ass, they drove the animal forth into the camp.

From this time, there was appointed an additional guard around the tents of the king and queen, composed of twelve hundred cavaliers of rank, of the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon. No person was admitted to the royal presence armed; no Moor was allowed to enter the camp, without a previous knowledge of his character and business; and on no account was any Moor to be introduced into the presence of the sovereigns.

An act of treachery of such ferocious nature, gave rise to a train of gloomy apprehensions. There were many cabins and sheds about the camp, constructed of branches of trees which had become dry and combustible; and fears were entertained that they might be set on fire by the Mudexares, or Moorish vassals, who visited the army. Some even dreaded that attempts might be made to poison the wells and fountains. To quiet these dismal alarms, all Mudexares were ordered to leave the camp; and all loose, idle loiterers, who could not give a good account of themselves, were taken into custody.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW HAMET EL ZEGRI WAS HARDENED IN HIS OBSTINACY, BY
THE ARTS OF A MOORISH ASTROLOGER.

AMONG those followers of the santón that had effected their entrance into the city, was a dark African of the tribe of the Gomores, who was likewise a hermit or dervise, and passed among the Moors for a holy and inspired man. No sooner were the mangled remains of his predecessor buried with the honors of martyrdom, than this dervise elevated himself in his place, and professed to be gifted with the spirit of prophecy. He displayed a white banner, which, he assured the Moors, was sacred; that he had retained it for twenty years for some signal purpose, and that Allah had revealed to him that under that banner the inhabitants of Malaga should sally forth upon the

camp of the unbelievers, put it to utter rout, and banquet upon the provisions in which it abounded.* The hungry and credulous Moors were elated at this prediction, and cried out to be led forth at once to the attack; but the dervise told them the time was not yet arrived, for every event had its allotted day in the decrees of fate; they must wait patiently, therefore, until the appointed time should be revealed to him by Heaven. Hamet el Zegri listened to the dervise with profound reverence, and his example had great effect in increasing the awe and deference of his followers. He took the holy man up into his strong-hold of Gibralfaro, consulted him on all occasions, and hung out his white banner on the loftiest tower, as a signal of encouragement to the people of the city.

In the mean time, the prime chivalry of Spain was gradually assembling before the walls of Malaga. The army which had commenced the siege had been worn out by extreme hardships, having had to construct immense works, to dig trenches and mines, to mount guard by sea and land, to patrol the mountains, and to sustain incessant conflicts. The sovereigns were obliged, therefore, to call upon various distant cities, for reinforcements of horse and foot. Many nobles, also, assembled their vassals, and repaired, of their own accord, to the royal camp.

Every little while, some stately galley or gallant caravel would stand into the harbor, displaying the well-known banner of some Spanish cavalier, and thundering from its artillery a salutation to the sovereigns and a defiance to the Moors. On the land side also, reinforcements would be seen, winding down from the mountains to the sound of drum and trumpet, and marching into the camp with glistening arms, as yet unsullied by the toils of war.

One morning, the whole sea was whitened by the sails and vexed by the oars of ships and galleys bearing towards the port. One hundred vessels of various kinds and sizes arrived, some armed for warlike service, others deep freighted with provisions. At the same time, the clangor of drum and trumpet bespoke the arrival of a powerful force by land, which came pouring in lengthening columns into the camp. This mighty reinforcement was furnished by the duke of Medina Sidonia, who reigned like a petty monarch over his vast possessions. He came with this princely force, a volunteer to the

* Cura de los Palacios.

royal standard, not having been summoned by the sovereigns; and he brought, moreover, a loan of twenty thousand doblas of gold.

When the camp was thus powerfully reinforced, Isabella advised that new offers of an indulgent kind should be made to the inhabitants; for she was anxious to prevent the miseries of a protracted siege, or the effusion of blood that must attend a general attack. A fresh summons was, therefore, sent for the city to surrender, with a promise of life, liberty, and property, in case of immediate compliance; but denouncing all the horrors of war, if the defence were obstinately continued.

Hamet el Zegri again rejected the offer with scorn. His main fortifications as yet were but little impaired, and were capable of holding out much longer; he trusted to the thousand evils and accidents that beset a besieging army, and to the inclemencies of the approaching season; and it is said that he, as well as his followers, had an infatuated belief in the predictions of the dervise.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida does not scruple to affirm, that the pretended prophet of the city was an arch nigromancer, or Moorish magician, "of which there be countless many," says he, "in the filthy sect of Mahomet;" and that he was leagued with the prince of the powers of the air, to endeavor to work the confusion and defeat of the Christian army. The worthy father asserts, also, that Hamet employed him in a high tower of the Gibralfaro, which commanded a wide view over sea and land, where he wrought spells and incantations with astrolabes and other diabolical instruments, to defeat the Christian ships and forces, whenever they were engaged with the Moors.

To the potent spells of this sorcerer, he ascribes the perils and losses sustained by a party of cavaliers of the royal household, in a desperate combat to gain two towers of the suburb, near the gate of the city called la Puerto de Granada. The Christians, led on by Ruy Lopez de Toledo, the valiant treasurer of the queen, took, and lost, and retook the towers, which were finally set on fire by the Moors, and abandoned to the flames by both parties. To the same malignant influence he attributes the damage done to the Christian fleet, which was so vigorously assailed by the albatozas, or floating batteries of the Moors, that one ship, belonging to the duke of Medina Sidonia, was sunk, and the rest were obliged to retire.

"Hamet el Zegri," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "stood on

the top of the high tower of Gibralfaro, and beheld this injury wrought upon the Christian force, and his proud heart was puffed up. And the Moorish nigromancer stood beside him. And he pointed out to him the Christian host below, encamped on every eminence around the city, and covering its fertile valley, and the many ships floating upon the tranquil sea; and he bade him be strong of heart, for that in a few days all this mighty fleet would be scattered by the winds of Heaven; and that he should sally forth, under guidance of the sacred banner, and attack this host and utterly defeat it, and make spoil of those sumptuous tents; and Malaga should be triumphantly revenged upon her assailants. So the heart of Hamet was hardened like that of Pharaoh, and he persisted in setting at defiance the Catholic sovereigns and their army of saintly warriors."

CHAPTER XVI.

SIEGE OF MALAGA CONTINUED—DESTRUCTION OF A TOWER, BY FRANCISCO RAMIREZ DE MADRID.

SEEING the infatuated obstinacy of the besieged, the Christians now approached their works to the walls, gaining one position after another, preparatory to a general assault. Near the barrier of the city was a bridge with four arches, defended at each end by a strong and lofty tower, by which a part of the army would have to pass in making an attack. The commander-in-chief of the artillery, Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, was ordered to take possession of this bridge. The approach to it was perilous in the extreme, from the exposed situation of the assailants, and the number of Moors that garrisoned the towers. Francisco Ramirez, therefore, secretly excavated a mine leading beneath the first tower, and placed a piece of ordnance with its mouth upwards, immediately under the foundation, with a train of powder to produce an explosion at the necessary moment.

When this was arranged, he advanced slowly with his forces in face of the towers, erecting bulwarks at every step, and gradually gaining ground, until he arrived near to the bridge. He then planted several pieces of artillery in his works, and began to batter the tower. The Moors replied bravely from

their battlements; but in the heat of the combat, the piece of ordnance under the foundation was discharged. The earth was rent open, a part of the tower overthrown, and several of the Moors torn to pieces; the rest took to flight, overwhelmed with terror at this thundering explosion bursting beneath their feet, and at beholding the earth vomiting flames and smoke; for never before had they witnessed such a stratagem in warfare. The Christians rushed forward and took possession of the abandoned post, and immediately commenced an attack upon the other tower at the opposite end of the bridge, to which the Moors had retired. An incessant fire of cross-bows and arquebusses was kept up between the rival towers, volleys of stones were discharged, and no one dared to venture upon the intermediate bridge.

Francisco de Ramirez at length renewed his former mode of approach, making bulwarks step by step, while the Moors, stationed at the other end, swept the bridge with their artillery. The combat was long and bloody,—furious on the part of the Moors, patient and persevering on the part of the Christians. By slow degrees, they accomplished their advance across the bridge, drove the enemy before them, and remained masters of this important pass.

For this valiant and skilful achievement, king Ferdinand, after the surrender of the city, conferred the dignity of knighthood upon Francisco Ramirez, in the tower which he had so gloriously gained.* The worthy padre Fray Antonio Agapida indulges in more than a page of extravagant eulogy, upon this invention of blowing up the foundation of the tower by a piece of ordnance, which he affirms to be the first instance on record of gunpowder being used in a mine.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE PEOPLE OF MALAGA EXPOSTULATED WITH HAMET EL ZEGRI.

WHILE the dervise was deluding the garrison of Malaga with vain hopes, the famine increased to a terrible degree. The Gomeres ranged about the city as though it had been a conquered place, taking by force whatever they found eatable in

* Pulgar, part 3, c. 91.

the houses of the peaceful citizens; and breaking open vaults and cellars, and demolishing walls, wherever they thought provisions might be concealed.

The wretched inhabitants had no longer bread to eat; the horse-flesh also now failed them, and they were fain to devour skins and hides toasted at the fire, and to assuage the hunger of their children with vine-leaves cut up and fried in oil. Many perished of famine, or of the unwholesome food with which they endeavored to relieve it; and many took refuge in the Christian camp, preferring captivity to the horrors which surrounded them.

At length the sufferings of the inhabitants became so great, as to conquer even their fears of Hamet and his Gomeres. They assembled before the house of Ali Dordux, the wealthy merchant, whose stately mansion was at the foot of the hill of the Alcazaba, and they urged him to stand forth as their leader, and to intercede with Hamet el Zegri for a surrender. Ali Dordux was a man of courage, as well as policy; he perceived also that hunger was giving boldness to the citizens, while he trusted it was subduing the fierceness of the soldiery. He armed himself, therefore, cap-a-pie, and undertook this dangerous parley with the alcayde. He associated with him an alfaqui named Abrahen Alharis, and an important inhabitant named Amar ben Amar; and they ascended to the fortress of Gibralfaro, followed by several of the trembling merchants.

They found Hamet el Zegri, not, as before, surrounded by ferocious guards and all the implements of war; but in a chamber of one of the lofty towers, at a table of stone, covered with scrolls traced with strange characters and mystic diagrams; while instruments of singular and unknown form lay about the room. Beside Hamet el Zegri stood the prophetic dervise, who appeared to have been explaining to him the mysterious inscriptions of the scrolls. His presence filled the citizens with awe, for even Ali Dordux considered him a man inspired.

The alfaqui Abrahen Alharis, whose sacred character gave him boldness to speak, now lifted up his voice, and addressed Hamet el Zegri. "We implore you," said he, solemnly, "in the name of the most powerful God, no longer to persist in a vain resistance, which must end in our destruction, but deliver up the city while clemency is yet to be obtained. Think how many of our warriors have fallen by the sword; do not

suffer those who survive to perish by famine. Our wives and children cry to us for bread, and we have none to give them. We see them expire in lingering agony before our eyes, while the enemy mocks our misery by displaying the abundance of his camp. Of what avail is our defence? Are our walls peradventure more strong than the walls of Ronda? Are our warriors more brave than the defenders of Loxa? The walls of Ronda were thrown down, and the warriors of Loxa had to surrender. Do we hope for succor?—from whence are we to receive it? The time for hope is gone by. Granada has lost its power; it no longer possesses chivalry, commanders, or a king. Boabdil sits a vassal in the degraded halls of the Alhambra; El Zagal is a fugitive, shut up within the walls of Guadix. The kingdom is divided against itself,—its strength is gone, its pride fallen, its very existence at an end. In the name of Allah, we conjure thee, who art our captain, be not our direst enemy; but surrender these ruins of our once happy Malaga, and deliver us from these overwhelming horrors.”

Such was the supplication forced from the inhabitants by the extremity of their sufferings. Hamet el Zegri listened to the alfaqui without anger, for he respected the sanctity of his office. His heart, too, was at that moment lifted up with a vain confidence. “Yet a few days of patience,” said he, “and all these evils will suddenly have an end. I have been conferring with this holy man, and find that the time of our deliverance is at hand. The decrees of fate are inevitable; it is written in the book of destiny, that we shall sally forth and destroy the camp of the unbelievers, and banquet upon those mountains of grain which are piled up in the midst of it. So Allah hath promised, by the mouth of this his prophet. Allah Achbar! God is great. Let no man oppose the decrees of Heaven!”

The citizens bowed with profound reverence, for no true Moslem pretends to struggle against whatever is written in the book of fate. Ali Dordux, who had come prepared to champion the city and to brave the ire of Hamet, humbled himself before this holy man, and gave faith to his prophecies as the revelations of Allah. So the deputies returned to the citizens, and exhorted them to be of good cheer: “A few days longer,” said they, “and our sufferings are to terminate. When the white banner is removed from the tower, then look out for deliverance; for the hour of sallying forth will have arrived.” The people retired to their homes, with sorrowful

hearts; they tried in vain to quiet the cries of their famishing children; and day by day, and hour by hour, their anxious eyes were turned to the sacred banner, which still continued to wave on the tower of Gibralfaro.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW HAMET EL ZEGRI SALLIED FORTH WITH THE SACRED BANNER, TO ATTACK THE CHRISTIAN CAMP.

"THE Moorish nigromancer," observes the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "remained shut up in a tower of the Gibralfaro, devising devilish means to work mischief and discomfiture upon the Christians. He was daily consulted by Hamet el Zegri, who had great faith in those black and magic arts, which he had brought with him from the bosom of heathen Africa."

From the account given of this dervise and his incantations by the worthy father, it would appear that he was an astrologer, and was studying the stars, and endeavoring to calculate the day and hour when a successful attack might be made upon the Christian camp.

Famine had now increased to such a degree as to distress even the garrison of Gibralfaro, although the Gomeres had seized upon all the provisions they could find in the city. Their passions were sharpened by hunger, and they became restless and turbulent, and impatient for action.

Hamet el Zegri was one day in counsel with his captains, perplexed by the pressure of events, when the dervise entered among them. "The hour of victory," exclaimed he, "is at hand. Allah has commanded that to-morrow morning ye shall sally forth to the fight. I will bear before you the sacred banner, and deliver your enemies into your hands. Remember, however, that ye are but instruments in the hands of Allah, to take vengeance on the enemies of the faith. Go into battle, therefore, with pure hearts, forgiving each other all past offences; for those who are charitable towards each other, will be victorious over the foe." The words of the dervise were received with rapture: all Gibralfaro and the Alcazaba resounded immediately with the din of arms; and Hamet sent

throughout the towers and fortifications of the city, and selected the choicest troops and most distinguished captains for this eventful combat.

In the morning early, the rumor went throughout the city that the sacred banner had disappeared from the tower of Gibralfaro, and all Malaga was roused to witness the sally that was to destroy the unbelievers. Hamet descended from his stronghold, accompanied by his principal captain, Abrahen Zenete, and followed by his Gomeres. The dervise led the way, displaying the white banner, the sacred pledge of victory. The multitude shouted "*Allah Acbar!*" and prostrated themselves before the banner as it passed. Even the dreaded Hamet was hailed with praises; for in their hopes of speedy relief through the prowess of his arm, the populace forgot every thing but his bravery. Every bosom in Malaga was agitated by hope and fear—the old men, the women and children, and all who went not forth to battle, mounted on tower and battlement and roof, to watch a combat that was to decide their fate.

Before sallying forth from the city, the dervise addressed the troops, reminding them of the holy nature of this enterprise, and warning them not to forfeit the protection of the sacred banner by any unworthy act. They were not to pause to make spoil nor to take prisoners: they were to press forward, fighting valiantly, and granting no quarter. The gate was then thrown open, and the dervise issued forth, followed by the army. They directed their assaults upon the encampments of the Master of Santiago and the Master of Alcantara, and came upon them so suddenly that they killed and wounded several of the guards. Abrahen Zenete made his way into one of the tents, where he beheld several Christian striplings just starting from their slumber. The heart of the Moor was suddenly touched with pity for their youth, or perhaps he scorned the weakness of the foe. He smote them with the flat, instead of the edge of the sword. "*Away, imps,*" cried he, "*away to your mothers.*" The fanatic dervise reproached him with his clemency—"I did not kill them," replied Zenete, "because I saw no beards!"*

The alarm was given in the camp, and the Christians rushed from all quarters to defend the gates of the bulwarks. Don Pedro Puerto Carrero, Senior of Moguer, and his brother Don Alonzo Pacheco, planted themselves, with their followers, in

* *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 84.

the gateway of the encampment of the Master of Santiago, and bore the whole brunt of battle until they were reinforced. The gate of the encampment of the Master of Calatrava was in like manner defended by Lorenzo Saurez de Mendoza. Hamet el Zegri was furious at being thus checked, where he had expected a miraculous victory. He led his troops repeatedly to the attack, hoping to force the gates before succor should arrive: they fought with vehement ardor, but were as often repulsed; and every time they returned to the assault, they found their enemies doubled in number. The Christians opened a cross-fire of all kinds of missiles, from their bulwarks; the Moors could effect but little damage upon a foe thus protected behind their works, while they themselves were exposed from head to foot. The Christians singled out the most conspicuous cavaliers, the greater part of whom were either slain or wounded. Still the Moors, infatuated by the predictions of the prophet, fought desperately and devotedly, and they were furious to avenge the slaughter of their leaders. They rushed upon certain death, endeavoring madly to scale the bulwarks, or force the gates, and fell amidst showers of darts and lances, filling the ditches with their mangled bodies.

Hamet el Zegri raged along the front of the bulwarks, seeking an opening for attack. He gnashed his teeth with fury, as he saw so many of his chosen warriors slain around him. He seemed to have a charmed life; for, though constantly in the hottest of the fight, amidst showers of missiles, he still escaped uninjured. Blindly confiding in the prophecy of victory, he continued to urge on his devoted troops. The dervise, too, ran like a maniac through the ranks, waving his white banner, and inciting the Moors by howlings rather than by shouts. In the midst of his frenzy, a stone from a catapult struck him on the head, and dashed out his bewildered brains.*

When the Moors beheld their prophet slain, and his banner in the dust, they were seized with despair, and fled in confusion to the city. Hamet el Zegri made some effort to rally them, but was himself confounded by the fall of the dervise. He covered the flight of his broken forces, turning repeatedly upon their pursuers, and slowly making his retreat into the city.

The inhabitants of Malaga witnessed from their walls, with trembling anxiety, the whole of this disastrous conflict. At

the first onset, when they beheld the guards of the camp put to flight, they exclaimed, "Allah has given us the victory!" and they sent up shouts of triumph. Their exultation, however, was soon turned into doubt, when they beheld their troops repulsed in repeated attacks. They could see, from time to time, some distinguished warrior laid low, and others brought back bleeding to the city. When at length the sacred banner fell, and the routed troops came flying to the gates, pursued and cut down by the foe, horror and despair seized upon the populace.

As Hamet el Zegri entered the gates, he heard nothing but loud lamentations: mothers, whose sons had been slain, shrieked curses after him as he passed; some, in the anguish of their hearts, threw down their famishing babes before him, exclaiming, "Trample on them with thy horse's feet; for we have no food to give them, and we cannot endure their cries." All heaped execrations on his head, as the cause of the woes of Malaga.

The warlike part of the citizens also, and many warriors, who, with their wives and children, had taken refuge in Malaga from the mountain fortresses, now joined in the popular clamor, for their hearts were overcome by the sufferings of their families.

Hamet el Zegri found it impossible to withstand this torrent of lamentations, curses, and reproaches. His military ascendancy was at an end; for most of his officers, and the prime warriors of his African band, had fallen in this disastrous sally. Turning his back, therefore, upon the city, and abandoning it to its own councils, he retired with the remnant of his Gomeres to his strong-hold in the Gibralfaro.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW THE CITY OF MALAGA CAPITULATED.

THE people of Malaga, being no longer overawed by Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeres, turned to Ali Dordux, the magnanimous merchant, and put the fate of the city into his hands. He had already gained the alcaydes of the castle of the Genoese, and of the citadel, into his party, and in the late con-

fusion had gained the sway over those important fortresses. He now associated himself with the alfaqui Abrahen Alhariz and four of the principal inhabitants, and, forming a provisional junta, they sent heralds to the Christian sovereigns, offering to surrender the city on certain terms, protecting the persons and property of the inhabitants, permitting them to reside as Mudexares or tributary vassals, either in Malaga or elsewhere.

When the heralds arrived at the camp, and made known their mission to king Ferdinand, his anger was kindled. "Return to your fellow-citizens," said he, "and tell them that the day of grace is gone by. They have persisted in a fruitless defence, until they are driven by necessity to capitulate; they must surrender unconditionally, and abide the fate of the vanquished. Those who merit death shall suffer death: those who merit captivity shall be made captives."

This stern reply spread consternation among the people of Malaga; but Ali Dordux comforted them, and undertook to go in person, and pray for favorable terms. When the people beheld this great and wealthy merchant, who was so eminent in their city, departing with his associates on this mission, they plucked up heart; for they said, "Surely the Christian king will not turn a deaf ear to such a man as Ali Dordux!"

Ferdinand, however, would not even admit the ambassadors to his presence. "Send them to the devil!" said he, in a great passion, to the commander of Leon; "I'll not see them. Let them get back to their city. They shall all surrender to my mercy, as vanquished enemies." *

To give emphasis to this reply, he ordered a general discharge from all the artillery and batteries; and there was a great shout throughout the camp, and all the lombards and catapults, and other engines of war, thundered furiously upon the city, doing great damage.

Ali Dordux and his companions returned to the city with downcast countenances, and could scarce make the reply of the Christian sovereign be heard, for the roaring of the artillery, the tumbling of the walls, and the cries of women and children. The citizens were greatly astonished and dismayed, when they found the little respect paid to their most eminent man; but the warriors who were in the city exclaimed, "What has this merchant to do with questions between men of battle?

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 84.

Let us not address the enemy as abject suppliants who have no power to injure, but as valiant men, who have weapons in their hands."

So they dispatched another message to the Christian sovereigns, offering to yield up the city and all their effects, on condition of being secured in their personal liberty. Should this be denied, they declared they would hang from the battlements fifteen hundred Christian captives, male and female; that they would put all their old men, their women and children, into the citadel, set fire to the city, and sally forth sword in hand, to fight until the last gasp. "In this way," said they, "the Spanish sovereigns shall gain a bloody victory, and the fall of Malaga be renowned while the world endures."

To this fierce and swelling message, Ferdinand replied, that if a single Christian captive were injured, not a Moor in Malaga but should be put to the edge of the sword.

A great conflict of counsels now arose in Malaga. The warriors were for following up their menace by some desperate act of vengeance or of self-devotion. Those who had families looked with anguish upon their wives and daughters, and thought it better to die than live to see them captives. By degrees, however, the transports of passion and despair subsided, the love of life resumed its sway, and they turned once more to Ali Dordux, as the man most prudent in council and able in negotiation. By his advice, fourteen of the principal inhabitants were chosen from the fourteen districts of the city, and sent to the camp, bearing a long letter, couched in terms of the most humble supplication.

Various debates now took place in the Christian camp. Many of the cavaliers were exasperated against Malaga for its long resistance, which had caused the death of many of their relations and favorite companions. It had long been a strong-hold also for Moorish depredators, and the mart where most of the warriors captured in the Axarquía had been exposed in triumph and sold to slavery. They represented, moreover, that there were many Moorish cities yet to be besieged; and that an example ought to be made of Malaga, to prevent all obstinate resistance thereafter. They advised, therefore, that all the inhabitants should be put to the sword!*

The humane heart of Isabella revolted at such sanguinary counsels: she insisted that their triumph should not be dis-

* Pulgar.

graced by cruelty. Ferdinand, however, was inflexible in refusing to grant any preliminary terms, insisting on an unconditional surrender.

The people of Malaga now abandoned themselves to paroxysms of despair; on the one side they saw famine and death, on the other slavery and chains. The mere men of the sword, who had no families to protect, were loud for signaling their fall by some illustrious action. "Let us sacrifice our Christian captives, and then destroy ourselves," cried some. "Let us put all the women and children to death, set fire to the city, fall on the Christian camp, and die sword in hand," cried others.

Ali Dordux gradually made his voice be heard, amidst the general clamor. He addressed himself to the principal inhabitants, and to those who had children. "Let those who live by the sword, die by the sword," cried he; "but let us not follow their desperate counsels. Who knows what sparks of pity may be awakened in the bosoms of the Christian sovereigns, when they behold our unoffending wives and daughters, and our helpless little ones! The Christian queen, they say, is full of mercy."

At these words, the hearts of the unhappy people of Malaga yearned over their families, and they empowered Ali Dordux to deliver up their city to the mercy of the Castilian sovereigns.

The merchant now went to and fro, and had several communications with Ferdinand and Isabella, and interested several principal cavaliers in his cause; and he sent rich presents to the king and queen, of oriental merchandise, and silks and stuffs of gold, and jewels and precious stones, and spices and perfumes, and many other sumptuous things, which he had accumulated in his great tradings with the east; and he gradually found favor in the eyes of the sovereigns.* Finding that there was nothing to be obtained for the city, he now, like a prudent man and able merchant, began to negotiate for himself and his immediate friends. He represented that from the first they had been desirous of yielding up the city, but had been prevented by warlike and high-handed men, who had threatened their lives: he entreated, therefore, that mercy might be extended to them, and that they might not be confounded with the guilty.

* MS. Chron. of Valera.

The sovereigns had accepted the presents of Ali Dordux—how could they then turn a deaf ear to his petition? So they granted a pardon to him, and to forty families which he named; and it was agreed that they should be protected in their liberties and property, and permitted to reside in Malaga as Mudexares or Moslem vassals, and to follow their customary pursuits.* All this being arranged, Ali Dordux delivered up twenty of the principal inhabitants, to remain as hostages, until the whole city should be placed in the possession of the Christians.

Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon, now entered the city, armed cap-a-pie, on horseback, and took possession in the name of the Castilian sovereigns. He was followed by his retainers, and by the captains and cavaliers of the army; and in a little while, the standards of the cross, and of the blessed Santiago, and of the Catholic sovereigns, were elevated on the principal tower of the Alcazaba. When these standards were beheld from the camp, the queen and the princess and the ladies of the court, and all the royal retinue, knelt down and gave thanks and praises to the holy virgin and to Santiago, for this great triumph of the faith; and the bishops and other clergy who were present, and the choristers of the royal chapel, chanted "*Te Deum Laudamus*," and "*Gloria in Excelsis*."

CHAPTER XX.

FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECY OF THE DERVISE—FATE OF HAMET EL ZEGRI.

No sooner was the city delivered up, than the wretched inhabitants implored permission to purchase bread for themselves and their children, from the heaps of grain which they had so often gazed at wistfully from their walls. Their prayer was granted, and they issued forth with the famished eagerness of starving men. It was piteous to behold the struggles of those unhappy people, as they contended who first should have their necessities relieved.

* Cura de los Palacios.

"Thus," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "thus are the predictions of false prophets sometimes permitted to be verified, but always to the confusion of those who trust in them: for the words of the Moorish nigromancer came to pass, that the people of Malaga should eat of those heaps of bread; but they ate in humiliation and defeat, and with sorrow and bitterness of heart.

Dark and fierce were the feelings of Hamet el Zegri, as he looked down from the castle of Gibralfaro and beheld the Christian legions pouring into the city, and the standard of the cross supplanting the crescent on the citadel. "The people of Malaga," said he, "have trusted to a man of trade, and he has trafficked them away; but let us not suffer ourselves to be bound hand and foot, and delivered up as part of his bargain. We have yet strong walls around us, and trusty weapons in our hands. Let us fight until buried beneath the last tumbling tower of Gibralfaro, or, rushing down from among its ruins, carry havoc among the unbelievers, as they throng the streets of Malaga!"

The fierceness of the Gomeres, however, was broken. They could have died in the breach, had their castle been assailed; but the slow advances of famine subdued their strength without rousing their passions, and sapped the force both of soul and body. They were almost unanimous for a surrender.

It was a hard struggle for the proud spirit of Hamet, to bow itself to ask for terms. Still he trusted that the valor of his defence would gain him respect in the eyes of a chivalrous foe. "Ali," said he, "has negotiated like a merchant; I will capitulate as a soldier." He sent a herald, therefore, to Ferdinand, offering to yield up his castle, but demanding a separate treaty.* The Castilian sovereign made a laconic and stern reply: "He shall receive no terms but such as have been granted to the community of Malaga."

For two days Hamet el Zegri remained brooding in his castle, after the city was in possession of the Christians; at length, the clamors of his followers compelled him to surrender. When the broken remnant of this fierce African garrison descended from their cragged fortress, they were so worn by watchfulness, famine, and battle, yet carried such a lurking fury in their eyes, that they looked more like fiends than men. They were all condemned to slavery, excepting Abrahen

* Cura de los Palacios.

Zenete. The instance of clemency which he had shown in refraining to harm the Spanish striplings, on the last sally from Malaga, won him favorable terms. It was cited as a magnanimous act by the Spanish cavaliers, and all admitted, that though a Moor in blood, he possessed the Christian heart of a Castilian hidalgo.*

As to Hamet el Zegri, on being asked what moved him to such hardened obstinacy, he replied, "When I undertook my command, I pledged myself to fight in defence of my faith, my city, and my sovereign, until slain or made prisoner; and depend upon it, had I had men to stand by me, I should have died fighting, instead of thus tamely surrendering myself without a weapon in my hand."

"Such," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "was the diabolical hatred and stiff-necked opposition of this infidel to our holy cause. But he was justly served by our most Catholic and high-minded sovereign, for his pertinacious defence of the city; for Ferdinand ordered that he should be loaded with chains, and thrown into a dungeon."†

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW THE CASTILIAN SOVEREIGNS TOOK POSSESSION OF THE CITY OF MALAGA, AND HOW KING FERDINAND SIGNALIZED HIMSELF BY HIS SKILL IN BARGAINING WITH THE INHABITANTS FOR THEIR RANSOM.

ONE of the first cares of the conquerors, on entering Malaga, was to search for Christian captives. Nearly sixteen hundred men and women were found, and among them were persons of distinction. Some of them had been ten, fifteen, and twenty years in captivity. Many had been servants to the Moors, or laborers on public works, and some had passed their time in chains and dungeons. Preparations were made to celebrate their deliverance as a Christian triumph. A tent was erected not far from the city, and furnished with an altar and all the solemn decorations of a chapel. Here the king and queen

* *Cura de los Palacios*, cap. 84.

† *Pulgar. Cronica.*

waited to receive the Christian captives. They were assembled in the city, and marshalled forth in piteous procession. Many of them had still the chains and shackles on their legs; they were wasted with famine, their hair and beards overgrown and matted, and their faces pale and haggard from long confinement. When they beheld themselves restored to liberty, and surrounded by their countrymen, some stared wildly about as if in a dream, others gave way to frantic transports, but most of them wept for joy. All present were moved to tears, by so touching a spectacle. When the procession arrived at what is called the Gate of Granada, it was met by a great concourse from the camp, with crosses and pennons, who turned and followed the captives, singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving. When they came in presence of the king and queen, they threw themselves on their knees and would have kissed their feet, as their saviours and deliverers; but the sovereigns prevented such humiliation, and graciously extended to them their hands. They then prostrated themselves before the altar, and all present joined them in giving thanks to God for their liberation from this cruel bondage. By orders of the king and queen, their chains were then taken off, and they were clad in decent raiment, and food was set before them. After they had eat and drunk, and were refreshed and invigorated, they were provided with money and all things necessary for their journey, and were sent joyfully to their homes.

While the old chroniclers dwell with becoming enthusiasm on this pure and affecting triumph of humanity, they go on, in a strain of equal eulogy, to describe a spectacle of a far different nature. It so happened, that there were found in the city twelve of those renegado Christians who had deserted to the Moors, and conveyed false intelligence, during the siege: a barbarous species of punishment was inflicted upon them, borrowed, it is said, from the Moors, and peculiar to these wars. They were tied to stakes in a public place, and horsemen exercised their skill in transpiercing them with pointed reeds, hurled at them while careering at full speed, until the miserable victims expired beneath their wounds. Several apostate Moors, also, who, having embraced Christianity, had afterwards relapsed into their early faith and had taken refuge in Malaga from the vengeance of the Inquisition, were publicly burnt. "These," says an old Jesuit historian, exultingly, "these were the tilts of reeds and the illuminations most pleasing for this

victorious festival, and for the Catholic piety of our sovereigns!"*

When the city was cleansed from the impurities and offensive odors which had collected during the siege, the bishops and other clergy who accompanied the court, and the choir of the royal chapel, walked in procession to the principal mosque, which was consecrated, and entitled Santa Maria de la Incarnation. This done, the king and queen entered the city, accompanied by the grand cardinal of Spain, and the principal nobles and cavaliers of the army, and heard a solemn mass. The church was then elevated into a cathedral, and Malaga was made a bishopric, and many of the neighboring towns were comprehended in its diocese. The queen took up her residence in the Alcazaba, in the apartments of her valiant treasurer, Ruy Lopez, from whence she had a view of the whole city; but the king established his quarters in the warrior castle of Gib-ralfaro.

And now came to be considered the disposition of the Moorish prisoners. All those who were strangers in the city, and had either taken refuge there, or had entered to defend it, were at once considered slaves. They were divided into three lots: one was set apart for the service of God, in redeeming Christian captives from bondage, either in the kingdom of Granada or in Africa; the second lot was divided among those who had aided either in field or cabinet, in the present siege, according to their rank; the third was appropriated to defray, by their sale, the great expenses incurred in the reduction of the place. A hundred of the Gomeres were sent as presents to Pope Innocent VIII., and were led in triumph through the streets of Rome, and afterwards converted to Christianity. Fifty Moorish maidens were sent to the queen Joanna of Naples, sister to king Ferdinand, and thirty to the queen of Portugal. Isabella made presents of others to the ladies of her household, and of the noble families of Spain.

Among the inhabitants of Malaga were four hundred and fifty Moorish Jews, for the most part women, speaking the Arabic language, and dressed in the Moresco fashion. These were ransomed by a wealthy Jew of Castile, farmer-general of the royal revenues derived from the Jews of Spain. He agreed to

* "Los renegados fueron acañavareados: y los conversos quemados: y estos fueron las cañas, y luminarias mas alegres, por la fiesta de la vitoria, para la piedad Catholica de nuestros Reyes."—*Abarca. Anales de Aragon*, tom. 2, Rey xxx. c. 3.

make up, within a certain time, the sum of twenty thousand doblas, or pistoles of gold; all the money and jewels of the captives being taken in part payment. They were sent to Castile, in two armed galleys.

As to the great mass of Moorish inhabitants, they implored that they might not be scattered and sold into captivity, but might be permitted to ransom themselves by an amount paid within a certain time. Upon this, king Ferdinand took the advice of certain of his ablest counsellors: they said to him, "If you hold out a prospect of hopeless captivity, the infidels will throw all their gold and jewels into wells and pits, and you will lose the greater part of the spoil; but if you fix a general rate of ransom, and receive their money and jewels in part payment, nothing will be destroyed." The king relished greatly this advice; and it was arranged that all the inhabitants should be ransomed at the general rate of thirty doblas or pistoles in gold for each individual, male or female, large or small; that all their gold, jewels, and other valuables should be received immediately in part payment of the general amount, and that the residue should be paid within eight months; that if any of the number, actually living, should die in the interim, their ransom should nevertheless be paid. If, however, the whole of the amount were not paid at the expiration of the eight months, they should all be considered and treated as slaves.

The unfortunate Moors were eager to catch at the least hope of future liberty, and consented to these hard conditions. The most rigorous precautions were taken to exact them to the uttermost. The inhabitants were numbered by houses and families, and their names taken down; their most precious effects were made up into parcels, and sealed and inscribed with their names; and they were ordered to repair with them to certain large corrales or inclosures adjoining the Alcazaba, which were surrounded by high walls and overlooked by watch-towers, to which places the cavalgadas of Christian captives had usually been driven, to be confined until the time of sale, like cattle in the market. The Moors were obliged to leave their houses one by one; all their money, necklaces, bracelets, and anklets of gold, pearl, coral, and precious stones, were taken from them at the threshold, and their persons so rigorously searched that they carried off nothing concealed.

Then might be seen old men and helpless women and tender maidens, some of high birth and gentle condition, passing

through the streets, heavily burdened, towards the Alcazaba. As they left their homes, they smote their breasts, and wrung their hands, and raised their weeping eyes to heaven in anguish; and, this is recorded as their plaint: "O Malaga! city so renowned and beautiful! where now is the strength of thy castles, where the grandeur of thy towers? Of what avail have been thy mighty walls, for the protection of thy children? Behold them driven from thy pleasant abodes, doomed to drag out a life of bondage in a foreign land, and to die far from the home of their infancy! What will become of thy old men and matrons, when their gray hairs shall be no longer revered? What will become of thy maidens, so delicately reared and tenderly cherished, when reduced to hard and menial servitude? Behold, thy once happy families are scattered asunder, never again to be united; sons are separated from their fathers, husbands from their wives, and tender children from their mothers: they will bewail each other in foreign lands, but their lamentations will be the scoff of the stranger. O Malaga! city of our birth! who can behold thy desolation, and not shed tears of bitterness?" *

When Malaga was completely secured, a detachment was sent against two fortresses near the sea, called Mixas and Osuna, which had frequently harassed the Christian camp. The inhabitants were threatened with the sword, unless they instantly surrendered. They claimed the same terms that had been granted to Malaga, imagining them to be freedom of person and security of property. Their claim was granted; they were transported to Malaga with all their riches, and, on arriving there, were overwhelmed with consternation at finding themselves captives. "Ferdinand," observes Fray Antonio Agapida, "was a man of his word; they were shut up in the inclosure at the Alcazaba with the people of Malaga, and shared their fate."

The unhappy captives remained thus crowded in the court-yards of the Alcazaba, like sheep in a fold, until they could be sent by sea and land to Seville. They were then distributed about in city and country, each Christian family having one or more to feed and maintain as servants, until the term fixed for the payment of the residue of the ransom should expire. The captives had obtained permission that several of their number should go about among the Moorish towns of the kingdom

* Pulgar.

of Granada, collecting contributions to aid in the purchase of their liberties; but these towns were too much impoverished by the war, and engrossed by their own distresses, to lend a listening ear: so the time expired without the residue of the ransom being paid, and all the captives of Malaga, to the number, as some say, of eleven, and others of fifteen thousand, became slaves! "Never," exclaims the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, in one of his usual bursts of zeal and loyalty, "never has there been recorded a more adroit and sagacious arrangement than this made by the Catholic monarch, by which he not only secured all the property and half of the ransom of these infidels, but finally got possession of their persons into the bargain. This truly may be considered one of the greatest triumphs of the pious and politic Ferdinand, and as raising him above the generality of conquerors, who have merely the valor to gain victories, but lack the prudence and management necessary to turn them to account."

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW KING FERDINAND PREPARED TO CARRY THE WAR INTO A DIFFERENT PART OF THE TERRITORIES OF THE MOORS.

THE western part of the kingdom of Granada had now been conquered by the Christian arms. The sea-port of Malaga was captured: the fierce and warlike inhabitants of the Serrania de Ronda, and the other mountain holds of the frontier, were all disarmed, and reduced to peaceful and laborious vassalage; their haughty fortresses, which had so long overawed the valleys of Andalusia, now displayed the standard of Castile and Arragon; the watch-towers, which crowned every height, and from whence the infidels had kept a vulture eye over the Christian territories, were now either dismantled, or garrisoned with Catholic troops. "What signalized and sanctified this great triumph," adds the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "were the emblems of ecclesiastical domination which every where appeared. In every direction arose stately convents and monasteries, those fortresses of the faith, garrisoned by its spiritual soldiery of monks and friars. The sacred melody of Christian bells was again heard among the mountains, call-

ing to early matins, or sounding the *Angeles* at the solemn hour of evening."

While this part of the kingdom was thus reduced by the Christian sword, the central part, round the city of Granada, forming the heart of the Moorish territory, was held in vassalage of the Castilian monarch, by Boabdil, surnamed *El Chico*. That unfortunate prince lost no occasion to propitiate the conquerors of his country by acts of homage, and by professions that must have been foreign to his heart. No sooner had he heard of the capture of Malaga, than he sent congratulations to the Catholic sovereigns, accompanied with presents of horses richly caparisoned for the king, and precious cloth of gold and oriental perfumes for the queen. His congratulations and his presents were received with the utmost graciousness; and the short-sighted prince, lulled by the temporary and politic forbearance of Ferdinand, flattered himself that he was securing the lasting friendship of that monarch.

The policy of Boabdil had its transient and superficial advantages. The portion of Moorish territory under his immediate sway had a respite from the calamities of war: the husbandmen cultivated their luxuriant fields in security, and the vega of Granada once more blossomed like the rose. The merchants again carried on a gainful traffic: the gates of the city were thronged with beasts of burden, bringing the rich products of every clime. Yet, while the people of Granada rejoiced in their teeming fields and crowded marts, they secretly despised the policy which had procured them these advantages, and held Boabdil for little better than an apostate and an unbeliever. Muley Abdallah el Zagal was now the hope of the unconquered part of the kingdom; and every Moor, whose spirit was not quite subdued with his fortunes, lauded the valor of the old monarch and his fidelity to the faith, and wished success to his standard.

El Zagal, though he no longer sat enthroned in the Alhambra, yet reigned over more considerable domains than his nephew. His territories extended from the frontier of Jaen along the borders of Murcia to the Mediterranean, and reached into the centre of the kingdom. On the north-east, he held the cities of Baza and Guadix, situated in the midst of fertile regions. He had the important sea-port of Almeria, also, which at one time rivalled Granada itself in wealth and population. Beside these, his territories included a great part of the Alpuxarra mountains, which extend across the kingdom.

and shoot out branches towards the sea-coast. This mountainous region was a strong-hold of wealth and power. Its stern and rocky heights, rising to the clouds, seemed to set invasion at defiance; yet within their rugged embraces were sheltered delightful valleys, of the happiest temperature and richest fertility. The cool springs and limpid rills which gushed out in all parts of the mountains, and the abundant streams, which, for a great part of the year, were supplied by the Sierra Nevada, spread a perpetual verdure over the skirts and slopes of the hills, and, collecting in silver rivers in the valleys, wound along among plantations of mulberry trees, and groves of oranges and citrons, of almonds, figs, and pomegranates. Here was produced the finest silk of Spain, which gave employment to thousands of manufacturers. The sun-burnt sides of the hills, also, were covered with vineyards; the abundant herbage of the mountain ravines, and the rich pasturage of the valleys, fed vast flocks and herds; and even the arid and rocky bosoms of the heights teemed with wealth, from the mines of various metals with which they were impregnated. In a word, the Alpuxarra mountains had ever been the great source of revenue to the monarchs of Granada. Their inhabitants, also, were hardy and warlike, and a sudden summons from the Moorish king could at any time call forth fifty thousand fighting men from their rocky fastnesses.

Such was the rich but rugged fragment of an empire which remained under the sway of the old warrior monarch El Zagal. The mountain barriers by which it was locked up, had protected it from most of the ravages of the present war. El Zagal prepared himself, by strengthening every fortress, to battle fiercely for its maintenance.

The Catholic sovereigns saw that fresh troubles and toils awaited them. The war had to be carried into a new quarter, demanding immense expenditures; and new ways and means must be devised to replenish their exhausted coffers. "As this was a holy war, however," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "and peculiarly redounded to the prosperity of the church, the clergy were full of zeal, and contributed vast sums of money and large bodies of troops. A pious fund was also produced, from the first fruits of that glorious institution, the Inquisition."

It so happened, that about this time there were many families of wealth and dignity in the kingdoms of Arragon and Valentia, and the principality of Catalonia, whose forefathers

had been Jews, but had been converted to Christianity. Notwithstanding the outward piety of these families, it was surmised, and soon came to be strongly suspected, that many of them had a secret hankering after Judaism; and it was even whispered, that some of them practised Jewish rites in private.

The Catholic monarch (continues Agapida) had a righteous abhorrence of all kinds of heresy, and a fervent zeal for the faith; he ordered, therefore, a strict investigation of the conduct of these pseudo Christians. Inquisitors were sent into these provinces for the purpose, who proceeded with their accustomed zeal. The consequence was, that many families were convicted of apostasy from the Christian faith, and of the private practice of Judaism. Some, who had grace and policy sufficient to reform in time, were again received into the Christian fold, after being severely mulcted and condemned to heavy penance; others were burnt at *auto da fés*, for the edification of the public, and their property was confiscated for the good of the state.

As these Hebrews were of great wealth, and had a hereditary passion for jewelry, there was found abundant store in their possession of gold and silver, of rings and necklaces, and strings of pearl and coral, and precious stones;—treasures easy of transportation, and wonderfully adapted for the emergencies of war. “In this way,” concludes the pious Agapida, “these backsliders, by the all-seeing contrivances of Providence, were made to serve the righteous cause which they had so treacherously deserted; and their apostate wealth was sanctified by being devoted to the service of Heaven and the crown, in this holy crusade against the infidels.”

It must be added, however, that these pious financial expedients received some check from the interference of queen Isabella. Her penetrating eyes discovered that many enormities had been committed under color of religious zeal, and many innocent persons accused by false witnesses of apostasy, either through malice or a hope of obtaining their wealth: she caused strict investigation, therefore, into the proceedings which had been held; many of which were reversed, and suborners punished in proportion to their guilt.*

* Pulgar, part 3, c. 100.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW KING FERDINAND INVADED THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE KINGDOM OF GRANADA, AND HOW HE WAS RECEIVED BY EL ZAGAL.

"MULEY ABDALLAH EL ZAGAL," says the venerable Jesuit father, Pedro Abarca, "was the most venomous Mahometan in all Morisma:" and the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida most devoutly echoes his opinion; "Certainly," adds the latter, "none ever opposed a more heathenish and diabolical obstinacy to the holy inroads of the cross and sword."

El Zagal felt that it was necessary to do something to quicken his popularity with the people, and that nothing was more effectual than a successful inroad. The Moors loved the stirring call to arms, and a wild foray among the mountains; and delighted more in a hasty spoil, wrested with hard fighting from the Christians, than in all the steady and certain gains secured by peaceful traffic.

There reigned at this time a careless security along the frontier of Jaen. The alcaides of the Christian fortresses were confident of the friendship of Boabdil el Chico, and they fancied his uncle too distant and too much engrossed by his own perplexities, to think of molesting them. On a sudden, El Zagal issued out of Guadix with a chosen band, passed rapidly through the mountains which extend behind Granada, and fell like a thunderbolt upon the territories in the neighborhood of Alcala la Real. Before the alarm could be spread and the frontier roused, he had made a wide career of destruction through the country, sacking and burning villages, sweeping off flocks and herds, and carrying away captives. The warriors of the frontier assembled; but El Zagal was already far on his return through the mountains, and he re-entered the gates of Guadix in triumph, his army laden with Christian spoil, and conducting an immense cavalgada. Such was one of the fierce El Zagal's preparatives for the expected invasion of the Christian king, exciting the warlike spirit of his people, and gaining for himself a transient popularity.

King Ferdinand assembled his army at Murcia in the spring of 1488. He left that city on the fifth of June, with a flying camp of four thousand horse and fourteen thousand foot. The

marques of Cadiz led the van, followed by the adelantado of Murcia. The army entered the Moorish frontier by the sea-coast, spreading terror through the land; wherever it appeared, the towns surrendered without a blow, so great was the dread of experiencing the woes which had desolated the opposite frontier. In this way, Vera, Velez el Rubio, Velez el Blanco, and many towns of inferior note, to the number of sixty, yielded at the first summons.

It was not until it approached Almeria, that the army met with resistance. This important city was commanded by the prince Zelim, a relation of El Zagal. He led forth his Moors bravely to the encounter, and skirmished fiercely with the advance guard in the gardens near the city. King Ferdinand came up with the main body of the army, and called off his troops from the skirmish. He saw that to attack the place with his present force was fruitless. Having reconnoitred the city and its environs, therefore, against a future campaign, he retired with his army and marched towards Baza.

The old warrior El Zagal was himself drawn up in the city of Baza, with a powerful garrison. He felt confidence in the strength of the place, and rejoiced when he heard that the Christian king was approaching. In the valley in front of Baza, there extended a great tract of gardens, like a continued grove, and intersected by canals and water-courses. In this he stationed a powerful ambuscade of arquebusiers and cross-bowmen. The vanguard of the Christian army came marching gayly up the valley, with great sound of drum and trumpet, and led on by the marques of Cadiz and the adelantado of Murcia. As they drew near, El Zagal sallied forth with horse and foot, and attacked them for a time with great spirit. Gradually falling back, as if pressed by their superior valor, he drew the exulting Christians among the gardens. Suddenly the Moors in ambuscade burst from their concealment, and opened such a terrible fire in flank and rear, that many of the Christians were slain, and the rest thrown into confusion. King Ferdinand arrived in time to see the disastrous situation of his troops, and gave signal for the vanguard to retire.

El Zagal did not permit the foe to draw off unmolested. Ordering out fresh squadrons, he fell upon the rear of the retreating troops with loud and triumphant shouts, driving them before him with dreadful havoc. The old war-cry of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" was again put up by the Moors, and was echoed with transport from the walls of the city. The Chris-

tians were for a time in imminent peril of a complete route, when fortunately the adelantado of Murcia threw himself with a large body of horse and foot between the pursuers and the pursued, covering the retreat of the latter, and giving them time to rally. The Moors were now attacked so vigorously in turn, that they gave over the unequal contest, and drew back slowly into the city. Many valiant cavaliers were slain in this skirmish, among the number of whom was Don Philip of Arragon, Master of the chivalry of St. George of Montesor; he was illegitimate son of the king's illegitimate brother Don Carlos, and his death was greatly bewailed by Ferdinand. He had formerly been archbishop of Palermo, but had doffed the cassock for the cuirass, and had thus, according to Fray Antonio Agapida, gained a glorious crown of martyrdom by falling in this holy war.

The warm reception of his advanced guard by the old warrior El Zagal, brought king Ferdinand to a pause: he encamped on the banks of the neighboring river Guadalquiron, and began to consider whether he had acted wisely in undertaking this campaign with his present force. His late successes had probably rendered him over-confident: El Zagal had again schooled him into his characteristic caution. He saw that the old warrior was too formidably ensconced in Baza, to be dislodged by any thing except a powerful army and battering artillery; and he feared, that should he persist in his invasion, some disaster might befall his army, either from the enterprise of the foe, or from a pestilence which prevailed in various parts of the country.

Ferdinand retired, therefore, from before Baza, as he had on a former occasion from before Loxa, all the wiser for a wholesome lesson in warfare, but by no means grateful to those who had given it, and with a solemn determination to have his revenge upon his teachers.

He now took measures for the security of the places gained in this campaign; placing in them strong garrisons, well armed and supplied, charging their alcaides to be vigilant on their posts and to give no rest to the enemy. The whole of the frontier was placed under the command of the brave Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. As it was evident, from the warlike character of El Zagal, that there would be abundance of active service and hard fighting, many hidalgos and young cavaliers, eager for distinction, remained with Puerto Carrero.

All these dispositions being made, king Ferdinand closed the

dubious campaign of this year, not, as usual, by returning in triumph at the head of his army to some important city of his dominions, but by disbanding the troops, and repairing to pray at the cross of Caravaca.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW THE MOORS MADE VARIOUS ENTERPRISES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS.

“WHILE the pious king Ferdinand,” observes Fray Antonio Agapida, “was humbling himself before the cross, and devoutly praying for the destruction of his enemies, that fierce pagan El Zagal, depending merely on his arm of flesh and sword of steel, pursued his diabolical outrages upon the Christians.” No sooner was the invading army disbanded, than El Zagal sallied forth from his strong-hold, and carried fire and sword into all those parts that had submitted to the Spanish yoke. The castle of Nixar, being carelessly guarded, was taken by surprise, and its garrison put to the sword. The old warrior raged with sanguinary fury about the whole frontier, attacking convoys, slaying, wounding, and making prisoners, and coming by surprise upon the Christians wherever they were off their guard.

The alcaide of the fortress of Cullar, confiding in the strength of its walls and towers, and in its difficult situation, being built on the summit of a lofty hill, and surrounded by precipices, ventured to absent himself from his post. The vigilant El Zagal was suddenly before it, with a powerful force: he stormed the town sword in hand, fought the Christians from street to street, and drove them, with great slaughter, to the citadel. Here a veteran captain, by the name of Juan de Avalos, a gray-headed warrior scarred in many a battle, assumed the command and made an obstinate defence. Neither the multitude of the enemy, nor the vehemence of their attacks, though led on by the terrible El Zagal himself, had power to shake the fortitude of this doughty old soldier.

The Moors undermined the outer walls and one of the towers of the fortress, and made their way into the exterior court. The alcaide manned the tops of his towers, pouring down melted pitch, and showering darts, arrows, stones, and all

kinds of missiles, upon the assailants. The Moors were driven out of the court; but, being reinforced with fresh troops, returned repeatedly to the assault. For five days the combat was kept up: the Christians were nearly exhausted, but they were sustained by the cheerings of their staunch old alcaide; and they feared death from the cruel El Zagal, should they surrender. At length the approach of a powerful force under Puerto Carrero relieved them from this fearful peril. El Zagal abandoned the assault, but set fire to the town in his rage and disappointment, and retired to his strong-hold of Guadix.

The example of El Zagal roused his adherents to action. Two bold Moorish alcaides, Ali Altar and Yza Altar, commanding the fortresses of Alhenden and Salobreña, laid waste the country of the subjects of Boabdil, and the places which had recently submitted to the Christians: they swept off the cattle, carried off captives, and harassed the whole of the newly conquered frontier.

The Moors also of Almeria, and Tavernas, and Purchena, made inroads into Murcia, and carried fire and sword into its most fertile regions. On the opposite frontier, also, among the wild valleys and rugged recesses of the Sierra Bormeja, or Red Mountains, many of the Moors who had lately submitted again flew to arms. The marques of Cadiz suppressed by timely vigilance the rebellion of the mountain town of Gausin, situated on a high peak, almost among the clouds; but others of the Moors fortified themselves in rock-built towers and castles, inhabited solely by warriors, from whence they carried on a continual war of forage and depredation; sweeping suddenly down into the valleys, and carrying off flocks and herds and all kinds of booty to these eagle-nests, to which it was perilous and fruitless to pursue them.

The worthy father Fray Antonio Agapida closes his history of this checkered year, in quite a different strain from those triumphant periods with which he is accustomed to wind up the victorious campaigns of the sovereigns. "Great and mighty," says this venerable chronicler, "were the floods and tempests which prevailed throughout the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, about this time. It seemed as though the windows of Heaven were again opened, and a second deluge overwhelming the face of nature. The clouds burst as it were in cataracts upon the earth; torrents rushed down from the mountains, overflowing the valleys; brooks were swelled into raging rivers; houses were undermined; mills were swept

away by their own streams; the affrighted shepherds saw their flocks drowned in the midst of the pasture, and were fain to take refuge for their lives in towers and high places. The Guadalquivir for a time became a roaring and tumultuous sea, inundating the immense plain of the Zablada, and filling the fair city of Seville with affright.

“A vast black cloud moved over the land, accompanied by a hurricane and a trembling of the earth. Houses were unroofed, the walls and battlements of fortresses shaken, and lofty towers rocked to their foundations. Ships, riding at anchor, were either stranded or swallowed up; others, under sail, were tossed to and fro upon mountain waves, and cast upon the land, where the whirlwind rent them in pieces and scattered them in fragments in the air. Doleful was the ruin and great the terror, when this baleful cloud passed by; and it left a long track of desolation over sea and land. Some of the faint-hearted,” adds Antonio Agapida, “looked upon this torment of the elements as a prodigious event, out of the course of nature. In the weakness of their fears, they connected it with those troubles which occurred in various places, considering it a portent of some great calamity, about to be wrought by the violence of the bloody-handed El Zagal and his fierce adherents.”

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW KING FERDINAND PREPARED TO BESIEGE THE CITY OF BAZA
AND HOW THE CITY PREPARED FOR DEFENCE.

THE stormy winter had passed away, and the spring of 1489 was advancing; yet the heavy rains had broken up the roads, the mountain brooks were swoln to raging torrents, and the late shallow and peaceful rivers were deep, turbulent, and dangerous. The Christian troops had been summoned to assemble in early spring on the frontiers of Jaen, but were slow in arriving at the appointed place. They were entangled in the miry defiles of the mountains, or fretted impatiently on the banks of impassable floods. It was late in the month of May, before they assembled in sufficient force to attempt the proposed invasion; when, at length, a valiant army, of thirteen thousand horse and forty thousand foot, marched merrily over

the border. The queen remained at the city of Jaen, with the prince-royal and the princesses her children, accompanied and supported by the venerable cardinal of Spain, and those reverend prelates who assisted in her councils throughout this holy war.

The plan of king Ferdinand was to lay siege to the city of Baza, the key of the remaining possessions of the Moor. That important fortress taken, Guadix and Almeria must soon follow, and then the power of El Zagal would be at an end. As the Catholic king advanced, he had first to secure various castles and strong-holds in the vicinity of Baza, which might otherwise harass his army. Some of these made obstinate resistance, especially the town of Cuxar. The Christians assailed the walls with various machines, to sap them and batter them down. The brave alcaide, Hubec Adalgan, opposed force to force and engine to engine. He manned his towers with his bravest warriors, who rained down an iron shower upon the enemy; and he linked cauldrons together by strong chains, and cast fire from them, consuming the wooden engines of their assailants, and those who managed them.

The siege was protracted for several days: the bravery of the alcaide could not save his fortress from an overwhelming foe, but it gained him honorable terms. Ferdinand permitted the garrison and the inhabitants to repair with their effects to Baza; and the valiant Hubec Adalgan marched forth with the remnant of his force, and took the way to that devoted city.

The delays which had been caused to the invading army by these various circumstances, had been diligently improved by the old Moorish monarch El Zagal; who felt that he was now making his last stand for empire, and that this campaign would decide, whether he should continue a king, or sink into a vassal. El Zagal was but a few leagues from Baza, at the city of Guadix. This last was the most important point of his remaining territories, being a kind of bulwark between them and the hostile city of Granada, the seat of his nephew's power. Though he heard of the tide of war, therefore, that was collecting and rolling towards the city of Baza, he dared not go in person to its assistance. He dreaded that, should he leave Guadix, Boabdil would attack him in rear while the Christian army was battling with him in front. El Zagal trusted in the great strength of Baza, to defy any violent assault; and he profited by the delays of the Christian army, to supply it with all possible means of defence. He sent

thither all the troops he could spare from his garrison of Guadix, and dispatched missives throughout his territories, calling upon true Moslems to hasten to Baza, to make a devoted stand in defence of their homes, their liberties, and their religion. The cities of Tavernas and Purchena, and the surrounding heights and valleys, responded to his orders and sent forth their fighting men to the field. The rocky fastnesses of the Alpuxarras resounded with the din of arms: troops of horse and bodies of foot-soldiers were seen winding down the rugged cliffs and defiles of those marble mountains, and hastening towards Baza. Many brave cavaliers of Granada also, spurning the quiet and security of Christian vassalage, secretly left the city and hastened to join their fighting countrymen. The great dependence of El Zagal, however, was upon the valor and loyalty of his cousin and brother-in-law, Cidi Yahye Alnayyar Aben Zelim, who was alcaide of Almeria, — a cavalier experienced in warfare, and redoubtable in the field. He wrote to him to leave Almeria, and repair, with all speed, at the head of his troops, to Baza. Cidi Yahye departed immediately, with ten thousand of the bravest Moors in the kingdom. These were for the most part hardy mountaineers, tempered to sun and storm, and tried in many a combat. None equalled them for a sally or a skirmish. They were adroit in executing a thousand stratagems, ambuscadoes, and evolutions. Impetuous in their assaults, yet governed in their utmost fury by a word or sign from their commander, at the sound of a trumpet they would check themselves in the midst of their career, wheel off and disperse; and at another sound of a trumpet, they would as suddenly re-assemble and return to the attack. They were upon the enemy when least expected, coming like a rushing blast, spreading havoc and consternation, and then passing away in an instant; so that when one recovered from the shock and looked around, behold nothing was to be seen or heard of this tempest of war, but a cloud of dust and the clatter of retreating hoofs.

When Cidi Yahye led his train of ten thousand valiant warriors into the gates of Baza, the city rang with acclamations, and for a time the inhabitants thought themselves secure. El Zagal, also, felt a glow of confidence, notwithstanding his own absence from the city. "Cidi Yahye," said he, "is my cousin and my brother-in-law; related to me by blood and marriage, he is a second self: happy is that monarch who has his kindred to command his armies."

With all these reinforcements, the garrison of Baza amounted to above twenty thousand men. There were at this time three principal leaders in the city:—Mohammed ben Hassan, surnamed the veteran, who was military governor or alcaÿde, an old Moor of great experience and discretion; the second was Hamet Abu Zali, who was captain of the troops stationed in the place; and the third was Hubec Adalgan, the valiant alcaÿde of Cuxar, who had repaired hither with the remains of his garrison. Over all these Cidi Yahye exercised a supreme command, in consequence of his being of the blood-royal, and in the especial confidence of Muley Abdallah el Zagal. He was eloquent and ardent in council, and fond of striking and splendid achievements; but he was a little prone to be carried away by the excitement of the moment, and the warmth of his imagination. The councils of war of these commanders, therefore, were more frequently controlled by the opinions of the old alcaÿde Mohammed ben Hassan, for whose shrewdness, caution, and experience, Cidi Yahye himself felt the greatest deference.

The city of Baza was situated in a great valley, eight leagues in length and three in breadth, called the Hoya, or basin of Baza. It was surrounded by a range of mountains, called the Sierra of Xabalcohol, the streams of which, collecting themselves into two rivers, watered and fertilized the country. The city was built in the plain; but one part of it was protected by the rocky precipices of the mountain, and by a powerful citadel; the other part was defended by massive walls, studded with immense towers. It had suburbs towards the plain, imperfectly fortified by earthen walls. In front of these suburbs extended a tract of orchards and gardens nearly a league in length, so thickly planted as to resemble a continual forest. Here, every citizen who could afford it, had his little plantation, and his garden of fruits and flowers and vegetables, watered by canals and rivulets, and dominated by a small tower to serve for recreation or defence. This wilderness of groves and gardens, intersected in all parts by canals and runs of water, and studded by above a thousand small towers, formed a kind of protection to this side of the city, rendering all approach extremely difficult and perplexed, and affording covert to the defenders.

While the Christian army had been detained before the frontier posts, the city of Baza had been a scene of hurried and unremitting preparation. All the grain of the surrounding

valley, though yet unripe, was hastily reaped and borne into the city, to prevent it from yielding sustenance to the enemy. The country was drained of all its supplies; flocks and herds were driven, bleating and bellowing, into the gates; long trains of beasts of burthen, some laden with food, others with lances, darts, and arms of all kinds, kept pouring into the place. Already there were munitions collected sufficient for a siege of fifteen months; yet still the eager and hasty preparation was going on, when the army of Ferdinand came in sight.

On one side might be seen scattered parties of foot and horse spurring to the gates, and muleteers hurrying forward their burthened animals, all anxious to get under shelter before the gathering storm; on the other side, the cloud of war came sweeping down the valley, the roll of drum or clang of trumpet resounding occasionally from its deep bosom, or the bright glance of arms flashing forth, like vivid lightning, from its columns. King Ferdinand pitched his tents in the valley, beyond the green labyrinth of gardens. He sent his heralds to summon the city to surrender, promising the most favorable terms in case of immediate compliance, and avowing in the most solemn terms his resolution never to abandon the siege until he had possession of the place.

Upon receiving this summons, the Moorish commanders held a council of war. The prince Cidi Yahye, indignant at the menace of the king, was for retorting by a declaration that the garrison never would surrender, but would fight until buried under the ruins of the walls. "Of what avail," said the veteran Mohammed, "is a declaration of the kind, which we may falsify by our deeds? Let us threaten what we know we can perform, and let us endeavor to perform more than we threaten."

In conformity to the advice of Mohammed ben Hassan, therefore, a laconic reply was sent to the Christian monarch, thanking him for his offer of favorable terms, but informing him they were placed in the city to defend, not to surrender it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BATTLE OF THE GARDENS BEFORE BAZA.

WHEN the reply of the Moorish commanders was brought to King Ferdinand, he prepared to press the siege with the utmost

rigor. Finding the camp too far from the city, and that the intervening orchards afforded shelter for the sallies of the Moors, he determined to advance it beyond the gardens, in the space between them and the suburbs, where his batteries would have full play upon the city walls. A detachment was sent in advance, to take possession of the gardens, and to keep a check upon the suburbs, opposing any sally, while the encampment should be formed and fortified. The various commanders entered the orchards at different points. The young cavaliers marched fearlessly forward, but the experienced veterans foresaw infinite peril in the mazes of this verdant labyrinth. The Master of St. Jago, as he led his troops into the centre of the gardens, exhorted them to keep by one another, and to press forward in defiance of all difficulty or danger; assuring them that God would give them the victory, if they attacked hardily and persisted resolutely.

Scarce had they entered the verge of the orchards, when a din of drums and trumpets, mingled with war-cries, was heard from the suburbs, and a legion of Moorish warriors on foot poured forth. They were led on by the prince Cidi Yahye. He saw the imminent danger of the city, should the Christians gain possession of the orchards. "Soldiers," he cried, "we fight for life and liberty, for our families, our country, our religion; * nothing is left for us to depend upon but the strength of our hands, the courage of our hearts, and the almighty protection of Allah." The Moors answered him with shouts of war, and rushed to the encounter. The two hosts met in the midst of the gardens. A chance-medley combat ensued, with lances, arquebusses, cross-bows, and scimitars; the perplexed nature of the ground, cut up and intersected by canals and streams, the closeness of the trees, the multiplicity of towers and petty edifices, gave greater advantages to the Moors, who were on foot, than to the Christians, who were on horseback. The Moors, too, knew the ground, with all its alleys and passes; and were thus enabled to lurk, to sally forth, to attack, and to retreat, almost without injury.

The Christian commanders, seeing this, ordered many of the horsemen to dismount and fight on foot. The battle then became fierce and deadly, each disregarding his own life, provided he could slay his enemy. It was not so much a general battle

* "Illi (Mauri) pro fortunis, pro libertate, pro laribus patriis, pro vita denique certabant."—*Pietro Martyr*, Epist. 70.

as a multitude of petty actions; for every orchard and garden had its distinct contest. No one could see further than the little scene of fury and bloodshed around him, nor know how the general battle fared. In vain the captains exerted their voices, in vain the trumpets brayed forth signals and commands—all was confounded and unheard in the universal din and uproar. No one kept to his standard, but fought as his own fury or fear dictated. In some places the Christians had the advantage, in others the Moors; often, a victorious party, pursuing the vanquished, came upon a superior and triumphant force of the enemy, and the fugitives turned back upon them in an overwhelming wave. Some broken remnants, in their terror and confusion, fled from their own countrymen and sought refuge among their enemies, not knowing friend from foe, in the obscurity of the groves. The Moors were more adroit in these wild skirmishings, from their flexibility, lightness, and agility, and the rapidity with which they would disperse, rally, and return again to the charge.*

The hardest fighting was about the small garden towers and pavilions, which served as so many petty fortresses. Each party by turns gained them, defended them fiercely, and were driven out; many of the towers were set on fire, and increased the horrors of the fight by the wreaths of smoke and flame in which they wrapped the groves, and by the shrieks of those who were burning.

Several of the Christian cavaliers, bewildered by the uproar and confusion, and shocked at the carnage which prevailed, would have led their men out of the action; but they were entangled in a labyrinth, and knew not which way to retreat. While in this perplexity, the standard-bearer of one of the squadrons of the grand cardinal had his arm carried off by a cannon-ball; the standard was well-nigh falling into the hands of the enemy, when Roderigo de Mendoza, an intrepid youth, natural son of the grand cardinal, rushed to its rescue, through a shower of balls, lances, and arrows, and, bearing it aloft, dashed forward with it into the hottest of the combat, followed by his shouting soldiery.

King Ferdinand, who remained in the skirts of the orchard, was in extreme anxiety. It was impossible to see much of the action, for the multiplicity of trees and towers, and the wreaths of smoke; and those who were driven out defeated, or came

* Mariana, lib. 25, cap. 13.

out wounded and exhausted, gave different accounts, according to the fate of the partial conflicts in which they had been engaged. Ferdinand exerted himself to the utmost to animate and encourage his troops to this blind encounter, sending reinforcements of horse and foot to those points where the battle was most sanguinary and doubtful.

Among those who were brought forth mortally wounded was Don Juan de Luna, a youth of uncommon merit, greatly prized by the king, beloved by the army, and recently married to Donna Catalina de Urrea, a young lady of distinguished beauty.* They laid him at the foot of a tree, and endeavored to stanch and bind up his wounds with a scarf which his bride had wrought for him; but his life-blood flowed too profusely; and while a holy friar was yet administering to him the last sacred offices of the church, he expired, almost at the feet of his sovereign.

On the other hand, the veteran alcaide Mohammed ben Hassan, surrounded by a little band of chieftains, kept an anxious eye upon the scene of combat from the walls of the city. For nearly twelve hours the battle had raged without intermission. The thickness of the foliage hid all the particulars from their sight; but they could see the flash of swords and glance of helmets among the trees. Columns of smoke rose in every direction, while the clash of arms, the thundering of ribadoquines and arquebusses, the shouts and cries of the combatants, and the groans and supplications of the wounded, bespoke the deadly conflict that was waging in the bosom of the groves. They were harassed, too, by the shrieks and lamentations of the Moorish women and children, as their wounded relations were brought bleeding from the scene of action; and were stunned by a general outcry of woe on the part of the inhabitants, as the body of Redoan Zalfarga, a renegado Christian, and one of the bravest of their generals, was borne breathless into the city.

At length the din of battle approached nearer to the skirts of the orchards. They beheld their warriors driven out from among the groves by fresh squadrons of the enemy, and, after disputing the ground inch by inch, obliged to retire to a place between the orchards and the suburbs, which was fortified with palisadoes.

The Christians immediately planted opposing palisadoes, and

* Mariana. P. Martyr. Zurita.

established strong outposts near to this retreat of the Moors; while, at the same time, king Ferdinand ordered that his encampment should be pitched within the hard-won orchards.

Mohammed ben Hassan sallied forth to the aid of the prince Cidi Yahye, and made a desperate attempt to dislodge the enemy from this formidable position: but the night had closed, and the darkness rendered it impossible to make any impression. The Moors, however, kept up constant assaults and alarms, throughout the night; and the weary Christians, exhausted by the toils and sufferings of the day, were not allowed a moment of repose.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

SIEGE OF BAZA—EMBARRASSMENTS OF THE ARMY.

THE morning sun rose upon a piteous scene, before the walls of Baza. The Christian outposts, harassed throughout the night, were pale and haggard; while the multitudes of slain which lay before their palisadoes, showed the fierce attacks they had sustained, and the bravery of their defence.

Beyond them lay the groves and gardens of Baza; once, the favorite resorts for recreation and delight—now, a scene of horror and desolation. The towers and pavilions were smoking ruins; the canals and water-courses were discolored with blood, and choked with the bodies of the slain. Here and there, the ground, deep dented with the tramp of man and steed, and plashed and slippery with gore, showed where there had been some fierce and mortal conflict; while the bodies of Moors and Christians, ghastly in death, lay half concealed among the matted and trampled shrubs, and flowers, and herbage.

Amidst these sanguinary scenes arose the Christian tents, which had been hastily pitched among the gardens in the preceding evening. The experience of the night, however, and the forlorn aspect of every thing in the morning, convinced king Ferdinand of the perils and hardships to which his camp must be exposed, in its present situation; and, after a consul-

* Pulgar, part 3, cap. 106, 107. Cura de los Palacios, cap. 92. Zurita, lib. 20, cap. 81.

tation with his principal cavaliers, he resolved to abandon the orchards.

It was a dangerous movement, to extricate his army from so entangled a situation, in the face of so alert and daring an enemy. A bold front was therefore kept up towards the city; additional troops were ordered to the advanced posts, and works begun as if for a settled encampment. Not a tent was struck in the gardens; but in the mean time, the most active and unremitting exertions were made to remove all the baggage and furniture of the camp back to the original station.

All day, the Moors beheld a formidable show of war maintained in front of the gardens; while in the rear, the tops of the Christian tents, and the pennons of the different commanders, were seen rising above the groves. Suddenly, towards evening, the tents sunk and disappeared: the outposts broke up their stations and withdrew, and the whole shadow of an encampment was fast vanishing from their eyes.

The Moors saw too late the subtle manœuvre of king Ferdinand. Cidi Yahye again sallied forth with a large force of horse and foot, and pressed furiously upon the Christians. The latter, however, experienced in Moorish attack, retired in close order, sometimes turning upon the enemy and driving them to their barricadoes, and then pursuing their retreat. In this way, the army was extricated, without much further loss, from the perilous labyrinths of the gardens.

The camp was now out of danger; but it was also too distant from the city to do mischief, while the Moors could sally forth and return without hindrance. The king called a council of war, to consider in what manner to proceed. The marques of Cadiz was for abandoning the siege for the present, the place being too strong, too well garrisoned and provided, and too extensive, to be either carried by assault or invested and reduced by famine, with their limited forces; while, in lingering before it, the army would be exposed to the usual maladies and sufferings of besieging armies, and, when the rainy season came on, would be shut up by the swelling of the rivers. He recommended, instead, that the king should throw garrisons of horse and foot into all the towns captured in the neighborhood, and leave them to keep up a predatory war upon Baza, while he should overrun and ravage all the country; so that, in the following year, Almeria and Guadix, having all their subject towns and territories taken from them, might be starved into submission.

Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon, on the other hand, maintained that to abandon the siege would be construed by the enemy into a sign of weakness and irresolution. It would give new spirits to the partisans of El Zagal, and would gain to his standard many of the wavering subjects of Boabdil, if it did not encourage the fickle populace of Granada to open rebellion. He advised therefore that the siege should be prosecuted with vigor.

The pride of Ferdinand pleaded in favor of the last opinion; for it would be doubly humiliating, again to return from a campaign in this part of the Moorish kingdom, without effecting a blow. But when he reflected on all that his army had suffered, and on all that they must suffer should the siege continue—especially from the difficulty of obtaining a regular supply of provisions for so numerous a host, across a great extent of rugged and mountainous country—he determined to consult the safety of his people, and to adopt the advice of the marques of Cadiz.

When the soldiery heard that the king was about to raise the siege in mere consideration of their sufferings, they were filled with generous enthusiasm, and entreated, as with one voice, that the siege might never be abandoned until the city surrendered.

Perplexed by conflicting counsels, the king dispatched messengers to the queen at Jaen, requesting her advice. Posts had been stationed between them, in such manner that missives from the camp could reach the queen within ten hours. Isabella sent instantly her reply. She left the policy of raising or continuing the siege to the decision of the king and his captains; but should they determine to persevere, she pledged herself, with the aid of God, to forward them men, money, provisions, and all other supplies, until the city should be taken.

The reply of the queen determined Ferdinand to persevere; and when his determination was made known to the army, it was hailed with as much joy as if it had been tidings of a victory.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SIEGE OF BAZA CONTINUED—HOW KING FERDINAND COMPLETELY INVESTED THE CITY.

THE Moorish prince Cidi Yahye had received tidings of the doubts and discussions in the Christian camp, and flattered himself with hopes that the besieging army would soon retire in despair, though the veteran alcaide Mohammed shook his head with incredulity at the suggestion. A sudden movement, one morning, in the Christian camp, seemed to confirm the sanguine hopes of the prince. The tents were struck, the artillery and baggage were conveyed away, and bodies of soldiers began to march along the valley. The momentary gleam of triumph was soon dispelled. The Catholic king had merely divided his host into two camps, the more effectually to distress the city. One, consisting of four thousand horse and eight thousand foot, with all the artillery and battering engines, took post on the side of the city towards the mountain. This was commanded by the valiant marques of Cadiz, with whom were Don Alonzo de Aguilar, Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, and many other distinguished cavaliers.

The other camp was commanded by the king, having six thousand horse and a great host of foot-soldiers, the hardy mountaineers of Biscay, Guipuscon, Galicia, and the Asturias. Among the cavaliers who were with the king were the brave count de Tendilla, Don Roderigo de Mendoza, and Don Alonzo de Cardenas, Master of Santiago. The two camps were wide asunder, on opposite sides of the city, and between them lay the thick wilderness of orchards. Both camps were therefore fortified by great trenches, breastworks, and palisadoes. The veteran Mohammed, as he saw these two formidable camps glittering on each side of the city, and noted the well-known pennons of renowned commanders fluttering above them, still comforted his companions: "These camps," said he, "are too far removed from each other, for mutual succor and co-operation; and the forest of orchards is as a gulf between them." This consolation was but of short continuance. Scarcely were the Christian camps fortified, when the ears of the Moorish garrison were startled by the sound of innumerable axes, and the crash of fallen trees. They looked with anxiety from their

highest towers, and behold, their favorite groves were sinking beneath the blows of the Christian pioneers. The Moors sallied forth with fiery zeal to protect their beloved gardens, and the orchards in which they so much delighted. The Christians, however, were too well supported to be driven from their work. Day after day, the gardens became the scene of incessant and bloody skirmishings; yet still the devastation of the groves went on, for king Ferdinand was too well aware of the necessity of clearing away this screen of woods, not to bend all his forces to the undertaking. It was a work, however, of gigantic toil and patience. The trees were of such magnitude, and so closely set together, and spread over so wide an extent, that, notwithstanding four thousand men were employed, they could scarcely clear a strip of land ten paces broad within a day; and such were the interruptions from the incessant assaults of the Moors, that it was full forty days before the orchards were completely levelled.

The devoted city of Baza now lay stripped of its beautiful covering of groves and gardens, at once its ornament, its delight, and its protection. The besiegers went on slowly and surely, with almost incredible labors, to invest and isolate the city. They connected their camps by a deep trench across the plain, a league in length, into which they diverted the waters of the mountain streams. They protected this trench by palisadoes, fortified by fifteen castles, at regular distances. They dug a deep trench, also, two leagues in length, across the mountain in the rear of the city, reaching from camp to camp, and fortified it on each side with walls of earth, and stone, and wood. Thus the Moors were inclosed on all sides by trenches, palisadoes, walls, and castles; so that it was impossible for them to sally beyond this great line of circumvallation—nor could any force enter to their succor. Ferdinand made an attempt, likewise, to cut off the supply of water from the city; “for water,” observes the worthy Agapida, “is more necessary to these infidels than bread, making use of it in repeated daily ablutions enjoined by their damnable religion, and employing it in baths and in a thousand other idle and extravagant modes, of which we Spaniards and Christians make but little account.”

There was a noble fountain of pure water, which gushed out at the foot of the hill Albohacen, just behind the city. The Moors had almost a superstitious fondness for this fountain, and chiefly depended upon it for their supplies. Receiving in-

timation from some deserters, of the plan of king Ferdinand to get possession of this precious fountain, they sallied forth at night, and threw up such powerful works upon the impending hill, as to set all attempts of the Christian assailants at defiance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

EXPLOIT OF HERNANDO PEREZ DEL PULGAR AND OTHER CAVALIERS.

THE siege of Baza, while it displayed the skill and science of the Christian commanders, gave but little scope for the adventurous spirit and fiery valor of the young Spanish cavaliers. They repined at the tedious monotony and dull security of their fortified camp, and longed for some soul-stirring exploit of difficulty and danger. Two of the most spirited of these youthful cavaliers were Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva, the latter of whom was son to the duke of Albuquerque. As they were one day seated on the ramparts of the camp, and venting their impatience at this life of inaction, they were overheard by a veteran adalid, one of those scouts or guides who are acquainted with all parts of the country. "Señors," said he, "if you wish for a service of peril and profit, if you are willing to pluck the fiery old Moor by the beard, I can lead you to where you may put your mettle to the proof. Hard by the city of Guadix, are certain hamlets rich in booty. I can conduct you by a way in which you may come upon them by surprise; and if you are as cool in the head, as you are hot in the spur, you may bear off your spoils from under the very eyes of old El Zagal."

The idea of thus making booty at the very gates of Guadix, pleased the hot-spirited youths. These predatory excursions were frequent about this time; and the Moors of Padul, Alhended, and other towns of the Alpuxarras, had recently harassed the Christian territories by expeditions of the kind. Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva soon found other young cavaliers of their age, eager to join in the adventure; and in a little while, they had nearly three hundred horse and two hundred foot, ready equipped and eager for the foray.

Keeping their destination secret, they sallied out of the camp

on the edge of an evening, and, guided by the adalid, made their way by star-light through the most secret roads of the mountains. In this way they pressed on rapidly day and night, until early one morning, before cock-crowing, they fell suddenly upon the hamlets, made prisoners of the inhabitants, sacked the houses, ravaged the fields, and, sweeping through the meadows, gathered together all the flocks and herds. Without giving themselves time to rest, they set out upon their return, making with all speed for the mountains, before the alarm should be given and the country roused.

Several of the herdsmen, however, had fled to Guadix, and carried tidings of the ravage to El Zagal. The beard of old Muley trembled with rage; he immediately sent out six hundred of his choicest horse and foot, with orders to recover the booty, and to bring those insolent marauders captive to Guadix.

The Christian cavaliers were urging their cavalgada of cattle and sheep up a mountain, as fast as their own weariness would permit, when, looking back, they beheld a great cloud of dust, and presently descried the turbaned host hot upon their traces.

They saw that the Moors were superior in number; they were fresh also, both man and steed, whereas both they and their horses were fatigued by two days and two nights of hard marching. Several of the horsemen therefore gathered round the commanders, and proposed that they should relinquish their spoil, and save themselves by flight. The captains, Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva, spurned at such craven counsel. "What!" cried they, "abandon our prey without striking a blow? Leave our foot-soldiers too in the lurch, to be overwhelmed by the enemy? If any one gives such counsel through fear, he mistakes the course of safety; for there is less danger in presenting a bold front to the foe, than in turning a dastard back; and fewer men are killed in a brave advance, than in a cowardly retreat."

Some of the cavaliers were touched by these words, and declared that they would stand by the foot-soldiers like true companions in arms: the great mass of the party, however, were volunteers, brought together by chance, who received no pay, nor had any common tie to keep them together in time of danger. The pleasure of the expedition being over, each thought but of his own safety, regardless of his companions. As the enemy approached, the tumult of opinions increased,

and every thing was in confusion. The captains, to put an end to the dispute, ordered the standard-bearer to advance against the Moors, well knowing that no true cavalier would hesitate to follow and defend his banner. The standard-bearer hesitated—the troops were on the point of taking to flight.

Upon this, a cavalier of the royal guards, named Hernando Perez del Pulgar, alcaide of the fortress of Salar, rode to the front. He took off a handkerchief which he wore round his head, after the Andalusian fashion, and, tying it to the end of his lance, elevated it in the air. "Cavaliers," cried he, "why do ye take weapons in your hands, if you depend upon your feet for safety? This day will determine who is the brave man, and who the coward. He who is disposed to fight, shall not want a standard: let him follow this handkerchief." So saying, he waved his banner, and spurred bravely against the Moors. His example shamed some, and filled others with generous emulation: all turned with one accord, and, following the valiant Pulgar, rushed with shouts upon the enemy. The Moors scarcely waited to receive the shock of their encounter. Seized with a sudden panic, they took to flight, and were pursued for a considerable distance, with great slaughter. Three hundred of their dead strewed the road, and were stripped and despoiled by the conquerors; many were taken prisoners, and the Christian cavaliers returned in triumph to the camp, with a long cavalgada of sheep and cattle, and mules laden with booty, and bearing before them the singular standard which had conducted them to victory.

When king Ferdinand was informed of the gallant action of Hernando Perez del Pulgar, he immediately conferred on him the honor of knighthood, and ordered, that in memory of his achievement, he should bear for arms a lance with a handkerchief at the end of it, together with a castle and twelve lions. This is but one of many hardy and heroic deeds done by this brave cavalier, in the wars against the Moors; by which he gained great renown, and the distinguished appellation of "*El de las hazañas*," or "*He of the exploits*."*

* Hernando del Pulgar, the historian, secretary to queen Isabella, is confounded with this cavalier, by some writers. He was also present at the siege of Baza, and has recounted this transaction in his chronicle of the Catholic sovereigns Ferdinand and Isabella.

CHAPTER XXX.

CONTINUATION OF THE SIEGE OF BAZA.

THE old Moorish king El Zagal mounted a tower and looked out eagerly to enjoy the sight of the Christian marauders brought captive into the gates of Guadix; but his spirits fell, when he beheld his own troops stealing back in the dusk of the evening, in broken and dejected parties.

The fortune of war bore hard against the old monarch; his mind was harassed by the disastrous tidings brought each day from Baza, of the sufferings of the inhabitants, and the numbers of the garrison slain in the frequent skirmishes. He dared not go in person to the relief of the place, for his presence was necessary in Guadix, to keep a check upon his nephew in Granada. He made efforts to send reinforcements and supplies; but they were intercepted, and either captured or driven back. Still his situation was in some respects preferable to that of his nephew Boabdil. The old monarch was battling like a warrior, on the last step of his throne; El Chico remained a kind of pensioned vassal, in the luxurious abode of the Alhambra. The chivalrous part of the inhabitants of Granada could not but compare the generous stand made by the warriors of Baza for their country and their faith, with their own timeserving submission to the yoke of an unbeliever. Every account they received of the woes of Baza, wrung their hearts with agony; every account of the exploits of its devoted defenders, brought blushes to their cheeks. Many stole forth secretly with their weapons, and hastened to join the besieged; and the partisans of El Zagal wrought upon the patriotism and passions of the remainder, until another of those conspiracies was formed, that were continually menacing the unsteady throne of Granada. It was concerted by the conspirators, to assail the Alhambra on a sudden; to slay Boabdil; to assemble all the troops, and march to Guadix; where, being reinforced by the garrison of that place, and led on by the old warrior monarch, they might fall with overwhelming power upon the Christian army before Baza.

Fortunately for Boabdil, he discovered the conspiracy in time, and had the heads of the leaders struck off, and placed upon the walls of the Alhambra,—an act of severity unusual

with this mild and wavering monarch, which struck terror into the disaffected, and produced a kind of mute tranquillity throughout the city.

King Ferdinand had full information of all these movements and measures for the relief of Baza, and took timely precautions to prevent them. Bodies of horsemen held watch in the mountain passes, to prevent all supplies, and to intercept any generous volunteers from Granada; and watch-towers were erected, or scouts were placed on every commanding height, to give the alarm at the least sign of a hostile turban.

The prince Cidi Yahye and his brave companions in arms, were thus gradually walled up, as it were, from the rest of the world. A line of towers, the battlements of which bristled with troops, girdled their city; and behind the intervening bulwarks and palisadoes, passed and repassed continual squadrons of troops. Week after week, and month after month, passed away, but Ferdinand waited in vain for the garrison to be either terrified or starved into surrender. Every day they sallied forth with the spirit and alacrity of troops high fed, and flushed with confidence. "The Christian monarch," said the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan, "builds his hopes upon our growing faint and desponding—we must manifest unusual cheerfulness and vigor. What would be rashness in other service, becomes prudence with us." The prince Cidi Yahye agreed with him in opinion, and sallied forth with his troops upon all kinds of harebrained exploits. They laid ambushes, concerted surprises, and made the most desperate assaults. The great extent of the Christian works rendered them weak in many parts: against these the Moors directed their attacks, suddenly breaking into them, making a hasty ravage, and bearing off their booty in triumph to the city. Sometimes they would sally forth by the passes and clefts of the mountain in the rear of the city, which it was difficult to guard, and, hurrying down into the plain, would sweep off all cattle and sheep that were grazing near the suburbs, and all stragglers from the camp.

These partisan sallies brought on many sharp and bloody encounters, in some of which Don Alonzo de Aguilar and the alcayde de los Donzeles distinguished themselves greatly. During one of these hot skirmishes, which happened on the skirts of the mountain, about twilight, a valiant cavalier, named Martin Galindo, beheld a powerful Moor dealing deadly blows about him, and making great havoc among the

Christians. Galindo pressed forward, and challenged him to single combat. The Moor, who was of the valiant tribe of the Abencerrages, was not slow in answering the call. Couching their lances, they rushed furiously upon each other. At the first shock the Moor was wounded in the face, and borne out of his saddle. Before Galindo could check his steed, and turn from his career, the Moor sprang upon his feet, recovered his lance, and, rushing upon him, wounded him in the head and the arm. Though Galindo was on horseback and the Moor on foot, yet such was the prowess and address of the latter, that the Christian knight, being disabled in the arm, was in the utmost peril, when his comrades hastened to his assistance. At their approach, the valiant pagan retreated slowly up the rocks, keeping them at bay, until he found himself among his companions.

Several of the young Spanish cavaliers, stung by the triumph of this Moslem knight, would have challenged others of the Moors to single combat; but king Ferdinand prohibited all vaunting encounters of the kind. He forbade his troops, also, to provoke skirmishes, well knowing that the Moors were more dexterous than most people in this irregular mode of fighting, and were better acquainted with the ground.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW TWO FRIARS ARRIVED AT THE CAMP, AND HOW THEY CAME FROM THE HOLY LAND.

WHILE the holy Christian army (says Fray Antonio Agapida) was thus beleaguering this infidel city of Baza, there rode into the camp, one day, two reverend friars of the order of Saint Francis. One was of portly person, and authoritative air: he bestrode a goodly steed, well conditioned and well caparisoned; while his companion rode beside him, upon a humble hack, poorly accoutred, and, as he rode, he scarcely raised his eyes from the ground, but maintained a meek and lowly air.

The arrival of two friars in the camp was not a matter of much note, for in these holy wars the church militant continually mingled in the affray, and helmet and cowl were

always seen together; but it was soon discovered that these worthy saints-errant were from a far country, and on a mission of great import.

They were, in truth, just arrived from the Holy Land, being two of the saintly men who kept vigil over the sepulchre of our blessed Lord at Jerusalem. He of the tall and portly form and commanding presence, was Fray Antonio Millan, prior of the Franciscan convent in the holy city. He had a full and florid countenance, a sonorous voice, and was round, and swelling, and copious in his periods, like one accustomed to harangue, and to be listened to with deference. His companion was small and spare in form, pale of visage, and soft and silken and almost whispering in speech. "He had a humble and lowly way," says Agapida, "evermore bowing the head, as became one of his calling." Yet he was one of the most active, zealous, and effective brothers of the convent; and when he raised his small black eye from the earth, there was a keen glance out of the corner, which showed, that though harmless as a dove, he was nevertheless as wise as a serpent.

These holy men had come on a momentous embassy from the grand soldan of Egypt; or, as Agapida terms him in the language of the day, the soldan of Babylon. The league which had been made between that potentate and his arch-foe the Grand-Turk Bajazet II., to unite in arms for the salvation of Granada, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter of this chronicle, had come to nought. The infidel princes had again taken up arms against each other, and had relapsed into their ancient hostility. Still the grand soldan, as head of the whole Moslem-sect, considered himself bound to preserve the kingdom of Granada from the grasp of unbelievers. He dispatched, therefore, these two holy friars with letters to the Castilian sovereigns, as well as to the pope and to the king of Naples, remonstrating against the evils done to the Moors of the kingdom of Granada, who were of his faith and kindred; whereas it was well known that great numbers of Christians were indulged and protected in the full enjoyment of their property, their liberty, and their faith, in his dominions. He insisted, therefore, that this war should cease; that the Moors of Granada should be reinstated in the territory of which they had been dispossessed; otherwise he threatened to put to death all the Christians beneath his sway, to demolish their convents and temples, and to destroy the holy sepulchre.

This fearful menace had spread consternation among the

Christians of Palestine; and when the intrepid Fray Antonio Millan and his lowly companion departed on their mission, they were accompanied far from the gates of Jerusalem by an anxious throng of brethren and disciples, who remained watching them with tearful eyes, as they journeyed over the plains of Judea.

These holy ambassadors were received with great distinction by king Ferdinand; for men of their cloth had ever high honor and consideration in his court. He had long and frequent conversations with them, about the Holy Land; the state of the Christian church in the dominions of the grand soldan, and of the policy and conduct of that arch-infidel towards it. The portly prior of the Franciscan convent was full, and round, and oratorical, in his replies; and the king expressed himself much pleased with the eloquence of his periods; but the politic monarch was observed to lend a close and attentive ear to the whispering voice of the lowly companion, "whose discourse," adds Agapida, "though modest and low, was clear and fluent, and full of subtle wisdom." These holy friars had visited Rome in their journeying, where they had delivered the letter of the soldan to the sovereign pontiff. His holiness had written by them to the Castilian sovereigns, requesting to know what reply they had to offer to this demand of the oriental potentate.

The king of Naples also wrote to them on the subject, but in wary terms. He inquired into the cause of this war with the Moors of Granada, and expressed great marvel at its events, as if (says Agapida) both were not notorious throughout all the Christian world. "Nay," adds the worthy friar with becoming indignation, "he uttered opinions savoring of little better than damnable heresy;—for he observed, that although the Moors were of a different sect, they ought not to be maltreated without just cause; and hinted that if the Castilian sovereigns did not suffer any crying injury from the Moors, it would be improper to do any thing which might draw great damage upon the Christians: as if, when once the sword of the faith was drawn, it ought ever to be sheathed until this scum of heathendom were utterly destroyed or driven from the land. But this monarch," he continues, "was more kindly disposed towards the infidels than was honest and hopeful in a Christian prince, and was at that very time in league with the soldan against their common enemy the Grand-Turk."

These pious sentiments of the truly Catholic Agapida, are echoed by Padre Mariana, in his history;* but the worthy chronicler Pedro Abarca attributes the interference of the king of Naples, not to lack of orthodoxy in religion, but to an excess of worldly policy; he being apprehensive that, should Ferdinand conquer the Moors of Granada, he might have time and means to assert a claim of the house of Arragon to the crown of Naples.

"King Ferdinand," continues the worthy father Pedro Abarca, "was no less master of dissimulation than his cousin of Naples; so he replied to him with the utmost suavity of manner, going into a minute and patient vindication of the war, and taking great apparent pains to inform him of those things which all the world knew, but of which the other pretended to be ignorant."† At the same time he soothed his solicitude about the fate of the Christians in the empire of the grand soldan, assuring him that the great revenue extorted from them in rents and tributes, would be a certain protection against the threatened violence.

To the pope he made the usual vindication of the war; that it was for the recovery of ancient territory, usurped by the Moors; for the punishment of wars and violences inflicted upon the Christians; and finally, that it was a holy crusade for the glory and advancement of the church.

"It was a truly edifying sight," says Agapida, "to behold these friars, after they had had their audience of the king, moving about the camp always surrounded by nobles and cavaliers of high and martial renown. These were insatiable in their questions about the Holy Land, the state of the sepulchre of our Lord, and the sufferings of the devoted brethren who guarded it, and the pious pilgrims who resorted there to pay their vows. The portly prior of the convent would stand with lofty and shining countenance in the midst of these iron warriors, and declaim with resounding eloquence on the history of the sepulchre; but the humbler brother would ever and anon sigh deeply, and in low tones utter some tale of suffering and outrage, at which his steel-clad hearers would grasp the hilts of their swords, and mutter between their clenched teeth prayers for another crusade."

The pious friars, having finished, their mission to the king,

* Mariana, lib. 25, cap. 15.

† Abarca, *Anales de Aragon*, Rey xxx. cap. 3.

and been treated with all due distinction, took their leave and wended their way to Jaen, to visit the most Catholic of queens. Isabella, whose heart was the seat of piety, received them as sacred men, invested with more than human dignity. During their residence at Jaen, they were continually in the royal presence; the respectable prior of the convent moved and melted the ladies of the court by his florid rhetoric, but his lowly companion was observed to have continual access to the royal ear. That saintly and soft-spoken messenger (says Agapida) received the reward of his humility; for the queen, moved by his frequent representations, made in all modesty and lowliness of spirit, granted a yearly sum in perpetuity, of one thousand ducats in gold, for the support of the monks of the convent of the holy sepulchre.*

Moreover, on the departure of these holy ambassadors, the excellent and most Catholic queen delivered to them a veil devoutly embroidered with her own royal hands, to be placed over the holy sepulchre;—a precious and inestimable present, which called forth a most eloquent tribute of thanks from the portly prior, but which brought tears into the eyes of his lowly companion.†

* “La Reyna dio a los Frayles mil ducados de renta cado año para el sustanto de los religiosos del santo sepulcro, que es la mejor limosna y sustanto que hasta nuestros días ha quedado a estos religiosas de Gerusalem: para donde les dio la Reyna un velo labrado por sus manos, para poner encima de la santa sepultura del Señor.”—*Garibay*, Compend. Hist. lib. 18, cap. 36.

† It is proper to mention the result of this mission of the two friars, and which the worthy Agapida has neglected to record. At a subsequent period, the Catholic sovereigns sent the distinguished historian, Pietro Martyr, of Angleria, as ambassador to the grand soldan. That able man made such representations as were perfectly satisfactory to the oriental potentate. He also obtained from him the remission of many exactions and extortions heretofore practised upon Christian pilgrims visiting the holy sepulchre; which, it is presumed, had been gently but cogently detailed to the monarch by the lowly friar. Pietro Martyr wrote an account of his embassy to the grand soldan—a work greatly esteemed by the learned, and containing much curious information. It is entitled, *De Legatione Babylonica*.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HOW QUEEN ISABELLA DEvised MEANS TO SUPPLY THE ARMY
WITH PROVISIONS.

It has been the custom to laud the conduct and address of king Ferdinand, in this most arduous and protracted war; but the sage Agapida is more disposed to give credit to the counsels and measures of the queen, who, he observes, though less ostensible in action, was in truth the very soul, the vital principle, of this great enterprise. While king Ferdinand was bustling in his camp and making a glittering display with his gallant chivalry, she, surrounded by her saintly counsellors, in the episcopal palace of Jaen, was devising ways and means to keep the king and his army in existence. She had pledged herself to keep up a supply of men, and money, and provisions, until the city should be taken. The hardships of the siege caused a fearful waste of life, but the supply of men was the least difficult part of her undertaking. So beloved was the queen by the chivalry of Spain, that on her calling on them for assistance, not a grandee or cavalier that yet lingered at home, but either repaired in person or sent forces to the camp; the ancient and warlike families vied with each other in marshalling forth their vassals, and thus the besieged Moors beheld each day fresh troops arriving before their city, and new ensigns and pennons displayed, emblazoned with arms well known to the veteran warriors.

But the most arduous task was to keep up a regular supply of provisions. It was not the army alone that had to be supported, but also the captured towns and their garrisons; for the whole country around them had been ravaged, and the conquerors were in danger of starving in the midst of the land they had desolated. To transport the daily supplies for such immense numbers, was a gigantic undertaking, in a country where there was neither water conveyance nor roads for carriages. Every thing had to be borne by beasts of burthen over rugged and broken paths of the mountains, and through dangerous defiles, exposed to the attacks, and plunderings of the Moors.

The wary and calculating merchants, accustomed to supply the army, shrunk from engaging, at their own risk, in so

hazardous an undertaking. The queen therefore hired fourteen thousand beasts of burthen, and ordered all the wheat and barley to be bought up in Andalusia, and in the domains of the knights of Santiago and Calatrava. She distributed the administration of these supplies among able and confidential persons. Some were employed to collect the grain; others, to take it to the mills; others, to superintend the grinding and delivery; and others, to convey it to the camp. To every two hundred animals a muleteer was allotted, to take charge of them on the route. Thus, great lines of convoys were in constant movement, traversing to and fro, guarded by large bodies of troops, to defend them from hovering parties of the Moors. Not a single day's intermission was allowed, for the army depended upon the constant arrival of these supplies for daily food. The grain, when brought into the camp, was deposited in an immense granary, and sold to the army at a fixed price, which was never either raised or lowered.

Incredible were the expenses incurred in these supplies; but the queen had ghostly advisers, thoroughly versed in the art of getting at the resources of the country. Many worthy prelates opened the deep purses of the church, and furnished loans from the revenues of their dioceses and convents; and their pious contributions were eventually rewarded by Providence an hundred fold. Merchants and other wealthy individuals, confident of the punctual faith of the queen, advanced large sums on the security of her word; many noble families lent their plate, without waiting to be asked. The queen also sold certain annual rents in inheritance at great sacrifices, assigning the revenue of towns and cities for the payment. Finding all this insufficient to satisfy the enormous expenditure, she sent her gold and plate and all her jewels to the cities of Valentia and Barcelona, where they were pledged for a great amount of money, which was immediately appropriated to keep up the supplies of the army.

Thus, through the wonderful activity, judgment, and enterprise of this heroic and magnanimous woman, a great host, encamped in the heart of a warlike country, accessible only over mountain roads, was maintained in continual abundance. Nor was it supplied merely with the necessaries and comforts of life. The powerful escorts drew merchants and artificers from all parts, to repair, as if in caravans, to this great military market. In a little while, the camp abounded with tradesmen and artists of all kinds, to administer to the luxury

and ostentation of the youthful chivalry. Here might be seen cunning artificers in steel, and accomplished armorers, achieving those rare and sumptuous helmets and cuirasses, richly gilt, inlaid, and embossed, in which the Spanish cavaliers delighted. Saddlers and harness-makers and horse-milliners, also, were there, whose tents glittered with gorgeous housings and caparisons. The merchants spread forth their sumptuous silks, cloths, brocades, fine linen, and tapestry. The tents of the nobility were prodigally decorated with all kinds of the richest stuffs, and dazzled the eye with their magnificence: nor could the grave looks and grave speeches of king Ferdinand prevent his youthful cavaliers from vying with each other in the splendor of their dresses and caparisons, on all occasions of parade and ceremony.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF THE DISASTERS WHICH BEFELL THE CAMP.

WHILE the Christian camp, thus gay and gorgeous, spread itself out like a holyday pageant before the walls of Baza—while a long line of beasts of burthen, laden with provisions and luxuries, were seen descending the valley from morning till night, and pouring into the camp a continued stream of abundance,—the unfortunate garrison found their resources rapidly wasting away, and famine already began to pinch the peaceful part of the community.

Cidi Yahye had acted with great spirit and valor, as long as there was any prospect of success; but he began to lose his usual fire and animation, and was observed to pace the walls of Baza with a pensive air, casting many a wistful look towards the Christian camp, and sinking into profound reveries and cogitations. The veteran alcaide, Mohammed ben Hassan, noticed these desponding moods, and endeavored to rally the spirits of the prince. “The rainy season is at hand,” would he cry; “the floods will soon pour down from the mountains; the rivers will overflow their banks, and inundate the valleys. The Christian king already begins to waver; he dare not linger, and encounter such a season, in a plain cut up by canals and rivulets. A single wintry storm from our

mountains would wash away his canvas city, and sweep off those gay pavilions like wreaths of snow before the blast."

The prince Cidi Yahye took heart at these words, and counted the days as they passed until the stormy season should commence. As he watched the Christian camp, he beheld it one morning in universal commotion: there was an unusual sound of hammers in every part, as if some new engines of war were constructing. At length, to his astonishment, the walls and roofs of houses began to appear above the bulwarks. In a little while, there were above a thousand edifices of wood and plaster erected, covered with tiles taken from the demolished towers of the orchards, and bearing the pennons of various commanders and cavaliers; while the common soldiery constructed huts, of clay and branches of trees, thatched with straw. Thus, to the dismay of the Moors, within four days the light tents and gay pavilions which had whitened their hills and plains, passed away like summer clouds; and the unsubstantial camp assumed the solid appearance of a city laid out into streets and squares. In the centre rose a large edifice which overlooked the whole; and the royal standard of Arragon and Castile, proudly floating above it, showed it to be the palace of the king.*

Ferdinand had taken the sudden resolution thus to turn his camp into a city, partly to provide against the approaching season, and partly to convince the Moors of his fixed determination to continue the siege. In their haste to erect their dwellings, however, the Spanish cavaliers had not properly considered the nature of the climate. For the greater part of the year, there scarcely falls a drop of rain on the thirsty soil of Andalusia. The ramblas, or dry channels of the torrents, remain deep and arid gashes and clefts in the sides of the mountains; the perennial streams shrink up to mere threads of of water, which, tinkling down the bottoms of the deep barrancas or ravines, scarce feed and keep alive the rivers of the valleys. The rivers, almost lost in their wide and naked beds, seem like thirsty rills, winding in serpentine mazes through deserts of sand and stones; and so shallow and tranquil in their course, as to be forded in safety in almost every part. One autumnal tempest of rain, however, changes the whole face of nature:—the clouds break in deluges among the vast congregation of mountains; the ramblas are suddenly filled

* Cura de los Palacios, Pulgar, etc.

with raging floods; the tinkling rivulets swell to thundering torrents, that come roaring down from the mountains, tumbling great masses of rocks in their career. The late meandering river spreads over its once naked bed, lashes its surges against the banks, and rushes like a wide and foaming inundation through the valley.

Scarcely had the Christians finished their slightly built edifices, when an autumnal tempest of the kind came scouring from the mountains. The camp was immediately overflowed. Many of the houses, undermined by the floods or beaten by the rain, crumbled away and fell to the earth, burying man and beast beneath their ruins. Several valuable lives were lost, and great numbers of horses and other animals perished. To add to the distress and confusion of the camp, the daily supply of provisions suddenly ceased; for the rain had broken up the roads, and rendered the rivers impassable. A panic seized upon the army, for the cessation of a single day's supply produced a scarcity of bread and provender. Fortunately, the rain was but transient: the torrents rushed by, and ceased; the rivers shrunk back again to their narrow channels, and the convoys that had been detained upon their banks arrived safely in the camp.

No sooner did queen Isabella hear of this interruption of her supplies, than, with her usual vigilance and activity, she provided against its recurrence. She dispatched six thousand foot-soldiers, under the command of experienced officers, to repair the roads, and to make causeways and bridges, for the distance of seven Spanish leagues. The troops, also, who had been stationed in the mountains by the king to guard the defiles, made two paths,—one for the convoys going to the camp, and the other for those returning, that they might not meet and impede each other. The edifices which had been demolished by the late floods were rebuilt in a firmer manner, and precautions were taken to protect the camp from future inundations.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIANS AND MOORS, BEFORE BAZA; AND THE DEVOTION OF THE INHABITANTS TO THE DEFENCE OF THEIR CITY.

WHEN King Ferdinand beheld the ravage and confusion produced by a single autumnal storm, and bethought him of all the maladies to which a besieging camp is exposed in inclement seasons, he began to feel his compassion kindling for the suffering people of Baza, and an inclination to grant them more favorable terms. He sent, therefore, several messages to the alcaide Mohammed ben Hassan, offering liberty of person and security of property for the inhabitants, and large rewards for himself, if he would surrender the city.

The veteran Mohammed was not to be dazzled by the splendid offers of the monarch; he had received exaggerated accounts of the damage done to the Christian camp by the late storm, and of the sufferings and discontents of the army in consequence of the transient interruption of supplies; he considered the overtures of Ferdinand as proofs of the desperate state of his affairs. "A little more patience, a little more patience," said the shrewd old warrior, "and we shall see this cloud of Christian locusts driven away before the winter storms. When they once turn their backs, it will be our turn to strike; and with the help of Allah, the blow shall be decisive." He sent a firm though courteous refusal to the Castilian monarch, and in the mean time animated his companions to sally forth with more spirit than ever, to attack the Spanish outposts and those laboring in the trenches. The consequence was, a daily occurrence of the most daring and bloody skirmishes, that cost the lives of many of the bravest and most adventurous cavaliers of either army.

In one of these sallies, nearly three hundred horse and two thousand foot mounted the heights behind the city, to capture the Christians who were employed upon the works. They came by surprise upon a body of guards, esquires of the count de Ureña, killed some, put the rest to flight, and pursued them down the mountain, until they came in sight of a small

force under the count de Tendilla and Gonsalvo of Cordova. The Moors came rushing down with such fury, that many of the men of the count de Tendilla betook themselves to flight. The brave count considered it less dangerous to fight than to fly. Bracing his buckler, therefore, and grasping his trusty weapon, he stood his ground with his accustomed prowess. Gonsalvo of Cordova ranged himself by his side, and, marshalling the troops which remained with them, they made a valiant front to the Moors.

The infidels pressed them hard, and were gaining the advantage, when Alonzo de Aguilar, hearing of the danger of his brother Gonsalvo, flew to his assistance, accompanied by the count of Ureña and a body of their troops. A hot fight ensued, from cliff to cliff and glen to glen. The Moors were fewer in number, but they excelled in the dexterity and lightness requisite for their scrambling skirmishes. They were at length driven from their vantage-ground, and pursued by Alonzo de Aguilar and his brother Gonsalvo to the very suburbs of the city, leaving many of the bravest of their men upon the field.

Such was one of innumerable rough encounters which were daily taking place, in which many brave cavaliers were slain, without any apparent benefit to either party. The Moors notwithstanding repeated defeats and losses, continued to sally forth daily, with astonishing spirit and vigor, and the obstinacy of their defence seemed to increase with their sufferings.

The prince Cidi Yahye was ever foremost in these sallies, but he grew daily more despairing of success. All the money in the military chest was expended, and there was no longer wherewithal to pay the hired troops. Still the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan undertook to provide for this emergency. Summoning the principal inhabitants, he represented the necessity of some exertion and sacrifice on their part, to maintain the defence of the city. "The enemy," said he, "dreads the approach of winter, and our perseverance drives him to despair. A little longer, and he will leave you in quiet enjoyment of your homes and families. But our troops must be paid, to keep them in good heart. Our money is exhausted, and all our supplies are cut off. It is impossible to continue our defence, without your aid."

Upon this the citizens consulted together, and they collected all their vessels of gold and silver, and brought them to Mohammed ben Hassan: "Take these," said they, "and coin them, or sell them, or pledge them, for money wherewith to

pay the troops." The women of Baza also were seized with generous emulation: "Shall we deck ourselves with gorgeous apparel," said they, "when our country is desolate, and its defenders in want of bread?" So they took their collars, and bracelets and anklets, and other ornaments of gold, and all their jewels, and put them in the hands of the veteran alcaide: "Take these spoils of our vanity," said they, "and let them contribute to the defence of our homes and families. If Baza be delivered, we need no jewels to grace our rejoicing; and if Baza fall, of what avail are ornaments to the captive?"

By these contributions was Mohammed enabled to pay the soldiery, and to carry on the defence of the city with unabated spirit.

Tidings were speedily conveyed to king Ferdinand, of this generous devotion on the part of the people of Baza, and the hopes which the Moorish commanders gave them that the Christian army would soon abandon the siege in despair. "They shall have a convincing proof of the fallacy of such hopes," said the politic monarch: so he wrote forth to queen Isabella, praying her to come to the camp in state, with all her train and retinue, and publicly to take up her residence there for the winter. By this means, the Moors would be convinced of the settled determination of the sovereigns to persist in the siege until the city should surrender, and he trusted they would be brought to speedy capitulation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOW QUEEN ISABELLA ARRIVED AT THE CAMP, AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF HER ARRIVAL.

MOHAMMED BEN HASSAN still encouraged his companions with hopes that the royal army would soon relinquish the siege; when they heard, one day, shouts of joy from the Christian camp, and thundering salvos of artillery. Word was brought, at the same time, from the sentinels on the watch-towers, that a Christian army was approaching down the valley. Mohammed and his fellow-commanders ascended one of the highest towers of the walls, and beheld in truth a numerous force, in shining array, descending the hills, and heard

the distant clangor of the trumpet and the faint swell of triumphant music.

As the host drew nearer, they descried a stately dame magnificently attired, whom they soon discovered to be the queen. She was riding on a mule, the sumptuous trappings of which were resplendent with gold, and reached to the ground. On her right hand rode her daughter, the princess Isabella, equally splendid in her array; and on her left, the venerable grand cardinal of Spain. A noble train of ladies and cavaliers followed her, together with pages and esquires, and a numerous guard of hidalgos of high rank, arrayed in superb armor. When the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan beheld that this was the queen Isabella, arriving in state to take up her residence in the camp, his heart failed him; he shook his head mournfully, and, turning to his captains, "Cavaliers," said he, "the fate of Baza is decided!"

The Moorish commanders remained gazing with a mingled feeling of grief and admiration at this magnificent pageant, which foreboded the fall of their city. Some of the troops would have sallied forth on one of their desperate skirmishes, to attack the royal guard; but the prince Cidi Yahye forbade them; nor would he allow any artillery to be discharged, or any molestation or insult to be offered; for the character of Isabella was venerated even by the Moors; and most of the commanders possessed that high and chivalrous courtesy which belongs to heroic spirits—for they were among the noblest and bravest cavaliers of the Moorish nation.

The inhabitants of Baza, when they learned that the Christian queen was approaching the camp, eagerly sought every eminence that could command a view of the plain; and every battlement, and tower, and mosque, was covered with turbaned heads gazing at the glorious spectacle. They beheld king Ferdinand issue forth in royal state, attended by the marques of Cadiz, the Master of Santiago, the duke of Alva the admiral of Castile, and many other nobles of renown; while the whole chivalry of the camp, sumptuously arrayed, followed in his train, and the populace rent the air with acclamations at the sight of the patriot queen.

When the sovereigns had met and embraced each other, the two hosts mingled together and entered the camp in martial pomp; and the eyes of the infidel beholders were dazzled by the flash of armor, the splendor of golden caparisons, the gorgeous display of silks and brocades and velvets, of tossing

plumes and fluttering banners. There was at the same time a triumphant sound of drums and trumpets, clarion and sackbuts, mingled with the sweet melody of the dulcimer, which came swelling in bursts of harmony that seemed to rise up to the heavens.*

On the arrival of the queen, (says the historian Hernando del Pulgar, who was present at the time,) it was marvellous to behold how all at once the rigor and turbulence of war were softened, and the storm of passion sunk into calm. The sword was sheathed; the cross-bow no longer lanced its deadly shafts; and the artillery, which had hitherto kept up an incessant uproar, now ceased its thundering. On both sides, there was still a vigilant guard kept up; the sentinels bristled the walls of Baza with their lances, and the guards patrolled the Christian camp; but there was no sallying forth to skirmish, nor any wanton violence or carnage.

Prince Cidi Yahye saw, by the arrival of the queen, that the Christians were determined to continue the siege, and he knew that the city would have to capitulate. He had been prodigal of the lives of his soldiers, as long as he thought a military good was to be gained by the sacrifice; but he was sparing of their blood in a hopeless cause, and weary of exasperating the enemy by an obstinate yet hopeless defence.

At the request of prince Cidi Yahye, a parley was granted, and the Master commander of Leon, Don Gutiere de Cardenas, was appointed to confer with the veteran alcaide Mohammed. They met at an appointed place, within view of both camp and city, honorably attended by cavaliers of either army. Their meeting was highly courteous, for they had learnt, from rough encounters in the field, to admire each other's prowess. The commander of Leon, in an earnest speech, pointed out the hopelessness of any further defence, and warned Mohammed of the ills which Malaga had incurred by its obstinacy. "I promise, in the name of my sovereigns," said he, "that if you surrender immediately, the inhabitants shall be treated as subjects, and protected in property, liberty, and religion. If you refuse, you, who are now renowned as an able and judicious commander, will be chargeable with the confiscations, captivities, and deaths, which may be suffered by the people of Baza."

The commander ceased, and Mohammed returned to the city

* Cura de los Palacios.

to consult with his companions. It was evident that all further resistance was hopeless; but the Moorish commanders felt that a cloud might rest upon upon their names, should they, of their own discretion, surrender so important a place without its having sustained an assault. Prince Cidi Yahye requested permission, therefore, to send an envoy to Guadix, with a letter to the old monarch El Zagal, treating of the surrender; the request was granted, a safe-conduct assured to the envoy, and the veteran alcaide Mohammed ben Hassan departed upon this momentous mission.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SURRENDER OF BAZA.

THE old warrior king was seated in an inner chamber of the castle of Guadix, much cast down in spirit, and ruminating on his gloomy fortunes, when an envoy from Baza was announced, and the veteran alcaide Mohammed stood before him. El Zagal saw disastrous tidings written in his countenance: "How fares it with Baza?" said he, summoning up his spirits to the question. "Let this inform thee," replied Mohammed; and he delivered into his hands the letter from the prince Cidi Yahye.

This letter spoke of the desperate situation of Baza; the impossibility of holding out longer, without assistance from El Zagal; and the favorable terms held out by the Castilian sovereigns. Had it been written by any other person, El Zagal might have received it with distrust and indignation; but he confided in Cidi Yahye as in a second self, and the words of his letter sunk deep in his heart. When he had finished reading it, he sighed deeply, and remained for some time lost in thought, with his head drooping upon his bosom. Recovering himself, at length, he called together the alfaquis and the old men of Guadix, and, communicating the tidings from Baza, solicited their advice. It was a sign of sore trouble of mind and dejection of heart, when El Zagal sought the advice of others; but his fierce courage was tamed, for he saw the end of his power approaching. The alfaquis and the old men did but increase the distraction of his mind by a variety of coun-

sel, none of which appeared of any avail; for unless Baza were succored, it was impossible that it should hold out; and every attempt to succor it had proved ineffectual.

El Zagal dismissed his council in despair, and summoned the veteran Mohammed before him. "Allah Acbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great; there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet. Return to my cousin, Cidi Yahye; tell him it is out of my power to aid him; he must do as seems to him for the best. The people of Baza have performed deeds worthy of immortal fame; I cannot ask them to encounter further ills and perils, in maintaining a hopeless defence."

The reply of El Zagal determined the fate of the city. Cidi Yahye and his fellow commanders immediately capitulated, and were granted the most favorable terms. The cavaliers and soldiers who had come from other parts to the defence of the place, were permitted to depart freely with their arms, horses, and effects. The inhabitants had their choice, either to depart with their property, or to dwell in the suburbs, in the enjoyment of their religion and laws, taking an oath of fealty to the sovereigns, and paying the same tribute they had paid to the Moorish kings. The city and citadel were to be delivered up in six days, within which period the inhabitants were to remove all their effects; and in the mean time, they were to place, as hostages, fifteen Moorish youths, sons of the principal inhabitants, in the hands of the commander of Leon. When Cidi Yahye and the alcayde Mohammed came to deliver up the hostages, among whom were the sons of the latter, they paid homage to the king and queen, who received them with the utmost courtesy and kindness, and ordered magnificent presents to be given to them, and likewise to the other Moorish cavaliers, consisting of money, robes, horses, and other things of great value.

The prince Cidi Yahye was so captivated by the grace, the dignity, and generosity of Isabella, and the princely courtesy of Ferdinand, that he vowed never again to draw his sword against such magnanimous sovereigns. The queen, charmed with his gallant bearing and his animated professions of devotion, assured him, that, having him on her side, she already considered the war terminated which had desolated the kingdom of Granada.

Mighty and irresistible are words of praise from the lips of sovereigns. Cidi Yahye was entirely subdued by this fair speech from the illustrious Isabella. His heart burned with a

sudden flame of loyalty towards the sovereigns. He begged to be enrolled amongst the most devoted of their subjects; and, in the fervor of his sudden zeal, engaged not merely to dedicate his sword to their service, but to exert all his influence, which was great, in persuading his cousin, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, to surrender the cities of Guadix and Almeria, and to give up all further hostilities. Nay, so powerful was the effect produced upon his mind by his conversation with the sovereigns, that it extended even to his religion; for he became immediately enlightened as to the heathenish abominations of the vile sect of Mahomet, and struck with the truths of Christianity, as illustrated by such powerful monarchs. He consented, therefore, to be baptized, and to be gathered into the fold of the church. The pious Agapida indulges in a triumphant strain of exultation, on the sudden and surprising conversion of this princely infidel: he considers it one of the greatest achievements of the Catholic sovereigns, and indeed one of the marvellous occurrences of this holy war: "But it is given to saints and pious monarchs," says he, "to work miracles in the cause of the faith; and such did the most Catholic Ferdinand, in the conversion of the prince Cidi Yahye."

Some of the Arabian writers have sought to lessen the wonder of this miracle, by alluding to great revenues granted to the prince and his heirs by the Castilian monarchs, together with a territory in Marchena, with towns, lands, and vassals; but in this (says Agapida) we only see a wise precaution of king Ferdinand, to clinch and secure the conversion of his proselyte. The policy of the Catholic monarch was at all times equal to his piety. Instead also of vaunting of this great conversion, and making a public parade of the entry of the prince into the church, king Ferdinand ordered that the baptism should be performed in private, and kept a profound secret. He feared that Cidi Yahye might otherwise be denounced as an apostate, and abhorred and abandoned by the Moors, and thus his influence destroyed in bringing the war to a speedy termination.*

The veteran Mohammed ben Hassan was likewise won by the magnanimity and munificence of the Castilian sovereigns, and entreated to be received into their service; and his example was followed by many other Moorish cavaliers, whose services were generously accepted and magnificently rewarded.

* Conde, tom. 3, cap. 40.

Thus, after a siege of six months and twenty days, the city of Baza surrendered on the 4th of December, 1489; the festival of the glorious Santa Barbara, who is said, in the Catholic calendar, to preside over thunder and lightning, fire and gun-powder, and all kinds of combustious explosions. The king and queen made their solemn and triumphant entry on the following day; and the public joy was heightened by the sight of upwards of five hundred Christian captives, men, women, and children, delivered from the Moorish dungeons.

The loss of the Christians in this siege amounted to twenty thousand men, of whom seventeen thousand died of disease, and not a few of mere cold,—a kind of death (says the historian Mariana) peculiarly uncomfortable; but (adds the venerable Jesuit) as these latter were chiefly people of ignoble rank, baggage-carriers and such like, the loss was not of great importance.

The surrender of Baza was followed by that of Almunecar, Tavernas, and most of the fortresses of the Alpuxarra mountains; the inhabitants hoped, by prompt and voluntary submission, to secure equally favorable terms with those granted to the captured city, and the alcaydes to receive similar rewards to those lavished on its commanders; nor were either of them disappointed. The inhabitants were permitted to remain as Mudexares, in the quiet enjoyment of their property and religion; and as to the alcaydes, when they came to the camp to render up their charges, they were received by Ferdinand with distinguished favor, and rewarded with presents of money in proportion to the importance of the places they had commanded. Care was taken by the politic monarch, however, not to wound their pride nor shock their delicacy; so these sums were paid under color of arrears due to them for their services to the former government. Ferdinand had conquered by dint of sword, in the earlier part of the war; but he found gold as potent as steel, in this campaign of Baza.

With several of these mercenary chieftains came one named Ali Aben Fahar, a seasoned warrior, who had held many important commands. He was a Moor of a lofty, stern, and melancholy aspect, and stood silent and apart, while his companions surrendered their several fortresses and retired laden with treasure. When it came to his turn to speak, he addressed the sovereigns with the frankness of a soldier, but with a tone of dejection and despair.

"I am a Moor," said he, "and of Moorish lineage, and am

alcayde of the fair towns and castles of Purchena and Paterna. These were intrusted to me to defend; but those who should have stood by me have lost all strength and courage, and seek only for security. These fortresses, therefore, most potent sovereigns, are yours, whenever you will send to take possession of them."

Large sums of gold were immediately ordered by Ferdinand to be delivered to the alcayde, as a recompense for so important a surrender. The Moor, however, put back the gift with a firm and haughty demeanor: "I came not," said he, "to sell what is not mine, but to yield what fortune has made yours; and your majesties may rest assured that, had I been properly seconded, death would have been the price at which I would have sold my fortresses, and not the gold you offer me."

The Castilian monarchs were struck with the lofty and loyal spirit of the Moor, and desired to engage a man of such fidelity in their service; but the proud Moslem could not be induced to serve the enemies of his nation and his faith.

"Is there nothing then," said Queen Isabella, "that we can do to gratify thee, and to prove to thee our regard?" "Yes," replied the Moor; "I have left behind me, in the towns and valleys which I have surrendered, many of my unhappy countrymen, with their wives and children, who cannot tear themselves from their native abodes. Give me your royal word that they shall be protected in the peaceable enjoyment of their religion and their homes." "We promise it," said Isabella; "they shall dwell in peace and security. But for thyself—what dost thou ask for thyself?" "Nothing," replied Ali, "but permission to pass unmolested, with my horses and effects into Africa."

The Castilian monarchs would fain have forced upon him gold and silver, and superb horses richly caparisoned, not as rewards, but as marks of personal esteem; but Ali Aben Fahar declined all presents and distinctions, as if he thought it criminal to flourish individually during a time of public distress, and disdained all prosperity that seemed to grow out of the ruins of his country.

Having received a royal passport, he gathered together his horses and servants, his armor and weapons, and all his warlike effects; bade adieu to his weeping countrymen with a brow stamped with anguish, but without shedding a tear; and, mounting his Barbary steed, turned his back upon the delightful valleys of his conquered country, departing on his lonely

way, to seek a soldier's fortune amidst the burning sands of Africa.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SUBMISSION OF EL ZAGAL TO THE CASTILIAN SOVEREIGNS.

EVIL tidings never fail by the way, through lack of messengers; they are wafted on the wings of the wind, and it is as if the very birds of the air would bear them to the ear of the unfortunate. The old king El Zagal buried himself in the recesses of his castle, to hide himself from the light of day, which no longer shone prosperously upon him; but every hour brought missives, thundering at the gate, with the tale of some new disaster. Fortress after fortress had laid its keys at the feet of the Christian sovereigns: strip by strip, of warrior mountain and green fruitful valley, was torn from his domains, and added to the territories of the conquerors. Scarcely a remnant remained to him, except a tract of the Alpuxarras, and the noble cities of Guadix and Almeria. No one any longer stood in awe of the fierce old monarch; the terror of his frown had declined with his power. He had arrived at that stage of adversity, when a man's friends feel emboldened to tell him hard truths, and to give him unpalatable advice; and when his spirit is bowed down to listen quietly, if not meekly.

El Zagal was seated on his divan, his whole spirit absorbed in rumination on the transitory nature of human glory, when his kinsman and brother-in-law, the prince Cidi Yahye, was announced. That illustrious convert to the true faith and the interests of the conquerors of his country, had hastened to Guadix with all the fervor of a new proselyte, eager to prove his zeal in the service of Heaven and the Castilian sovereigns, by persuading the old monarch to abjure his faith and surrender his possessions.

Cidi Yahye still bore the guise of a Moslem, for his conversion was as yet a secret. The stern heart of El Zagal softened at beholding the face of a kinsman in this hour of adversity. He folded his cousin to his bosom, and gave thanks to Allah

* Pulgar. Garibay, lib. 40, cap. 40. Cura de los Palacios.

that amidst all his troubles he had still a friend and counsellor on whom he might rely.

Cidi Yahye soon entered upon the real purpose of his mission. He represented to El Zagal the desperate state of affairs, and the irretrievable decline of Moorish power in the kingdom of Granada. "Fate," said he, "is against our arms; our ruin is written in the heavens. Remember the prediction of the astrologers, at the birth of your nephew Boabdil. We had hoped that their prediction was accomplished by his capture at Lucena; but it is now evident that the stars portended not a temporary and passing reverse of the kingdom, but a final overthrow. The constant succession of disasters which have attended our efforts, show that the sceptre of Granada is doomed to pass into the hands of the Christian monarchs. Such," concluded the prince emphatically, and with a profound and pious reverence, "such is the almighty will of God!"

El Zagal listened to these words in mute attention, without so much as moving a muscle of his face, or winking an eyelid. When the prince had concluded, he remained for a long time silent and pensive; at length, heaving a profound sigh from the very bottom of his heart, "*Alahuma subahana hu!*" exclaimed he, "the will of God be done! Yes, my cousin, it is but too evident that such is the will of Allah; and what he wills, he fails not to accomplish. Had he not decreed the fall of Granada, this arm and this scimitar would have maintained it."*

"What then remains," said Cidi Yahpe, "but to draw the most advantage from the wreck of empire that is left you? To persist in a war is to bring complete desolation upon the land, and ruin and death upon its faithful inhabitants. Are you disposed to yield up your remaining towns to your nephew El Chico, that they may augment his power, and derive protection from his alliance with the Christian sovereigns?"

The eye of El Zagal flashed fire at this suggestion. He grasped the hilt of his scimitar, and gnashed his teeth in fury. "Never," cried he, "will I make terms with that recreant and slave! Sooner would I see the banners of the Christian monarchs floating above my walls, than that they should add to the possessions of the vassal Boabdil!"

Cidi Yahpe immediately seized upon this idea, and urged El Zagal to make a frank and entire surrender: "Trust," said he,

* Conde, tom. 3, c. 40.

"to the magnanimity of the Castilian sovereigns; they will doubtless grant you high and honorable terms. It is better to yield to them as friends, what they must infallibly and before long wrest from you as enemies; for such, my cousin, is the almighty will of God!"

"*Alahuma subahana hu!*" repeated El Zagal, "the will of God be done!" So the old monarch bowed his haughty neck, and agreed to surrender his territories to the enemies of his faith, rather than suffer them to augment the Moslem power under the sway of his nephew.

Cidi Yahye now returned to Baza, empowered by El Zagal to treat on his behalf with the Christian sovereigns. The prince felt a species of exultation, as he expatiated on the rich relics of empire which he was authorized to cede. There was a great part of that line of mountains which extends from the metropolis to the Mediterranean sea, with their series of beautiful valleys, like precious emeralds set in a golden chain. Above all, there were Guadix and Almeria, two of the most inestimable jewels in the crown of Granada.

In return for these possessions, and for the claim El Zagal to the rest of the kingdom, the sovereigns received him into their friendship and alliance, and gave him in perpetual inheritance the territory of Andarax and the valley of Alhaurin in the Alpuxarras, with half of the silinas or salt-pits of Maleha. He was to enjoy the title of king of Andarax, with two thousand Mudexares, or conquered Moors, for subjects; and his revenues were to be made up to the sum of four millions of *marevedies*.* All these he was to hold, as a vassal of the Castilian crown.

These arrangements being made, Cidi Yahye returned with them to Muley Abdalla; and it was concerted that the ceremony of surrender and homage should take place at a city of Almeria.

On the 17th of December, king Ferdinand departed from Baza with a part of his army, and the queen soon followed with the remainder. Ferdinand passed in triumph by several of the newly-acquired towns, exulting in these trophies of his policy rather than his valor. As he drew near to Almeria, the Moorish king came forth to meet him, accompanied by the prince Cidi Yahye, and a number of the principal inhabitants on horseback. The fierce brow of El Zagal was clouded with

* *Cura de los Palacios*, cap. 94.

a kind of forced humility, but there was an impatient curl of the lip, with now and then a swelling of the bosom and an indignant breathing from the distended nostril. It was evident he considered himself conquered, not by the power of man, but by the hand of Heaven; and, while he bowed to the decrees of fate, it galled his proud spirit to have to humble himself before its mortal agent. As he approached the Christian king, he alighted from his horse, and advanced to kiss his hand in token of homage. Ferdinand, however, respected the title which the Moor had held, and would not permit the ceremony; but, bending from his saddle, graciously embraced him, and requested him to remount his steed.* Several courteous speeches passed between them; and the fortress and city of Almeria, and all the remaining territories of El Zagal, were delivered up in form. When all was accomplished, the old warrior Moor retired to the mountains with a handful of adherents, to seek his petty territory of Andarax, to bury his humiliation from the world, and to console himself with the shadowy title of king.†

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EVENTS OF GRANADA, SUBSEQUENT TO THE SUBMISSION OF EL ZAGAL.

Who can tell when to rejoice, in this fluctuating world? Every wave of prosperity has its reacting surge, and we are often overwhelmed by the very billow on which we thought to be wafted into the haven of our hopes. When Yusef Aben Comixa, the vizier of Boabdil, surnamed El Chico, entered the royal saloon of the Alhambra and announced the capitulation of El Zagal, the heart of the youthful monarch leaped for joy. His great wish was accomplished; his uncle was defeated and dethroned, and he reigned without a rival, sole monarch of Granada. At length, he was about to enjoy the fruits of his humiliation and vassalage. He beheld his throne fortified by the friendship and alliance of the Castilian monarchs; there could be no question, therefore, of its stability. "Allah Acbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great! Rejoice with me, oh

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 93.

† Pulgar, Garibay, &c., &c.

Yusef; the stars have ceased their persecution. Henceforth let no man call me *El Zogoybi*."

In the first moment of his exultation, Boabdil would have ordered public rejoicings; but the shrewd Yusef shook his head. "The tempest has ceased," said he, "from one point of the heavens, but it may begin to rage from another. A troubled sea is beneath us, and we are surrounded by rocks and quicksands: let my lord the king defer rejoicing until all has settled into a calm." *El Chico*, however, could not remain tranquil in this day of exultation: he ordered his steed to be sumptuously caparisoned, and, issuing out of the gate of the *Alhambra*, descended, with a glittering retinue, along the avenue of trees and fountains, into the city, to receive the acclamations of the populace. As he entered the great square of the *Vivarrambla*, he beheld crowds of people in violent agitation; but, as he approached, what was his surprise to hear groans and murmurs and bursts of execration! The tidings had spread through Granada, that Muley Abdalla el Zagal had been driven to capitulate, and that all his territories had fallen into the hands of the Christians. No one had inquired into the particulars, but all Granada had been thrown into a ferment of grief and indignation. In the heat of the moment, old Muley was extolled to the skies as a patriot prince, who had fought to the last for the salvation of his country—as a mirror of monarchs, scorning to compromise the dignity of his crown by any act of vassalage. Boabdil, on the contrary, had looked on exultingly at the hopeless yet heroic struggle of his uncle; he had rejoiced in the defeat of the faithful, and the triumph of unbelievers; he had aided in the dismemberment and downfall of the empire. When they beheld him riding forth in gorgeous state, on what they considered a day of humiliation for all true Moslems, they could not contain their rage; and amidst the clamors that met his ears, Boabdil more than once heard his name coupled with the epithets of traitor and renegado.

Shocked and discomfited, the youthful monarch returned in confusion to the *Alhambra*. He shut himself up within its innermost courts, and remained a kind of voluntary prisoner until the first burst of popular feeling should subside. He trusted that it would soon pass away; that the people would be too sensible of the sweets of peace to repine at the price at which it was obtained; at any rate, he trusted to the strong friendship of the Christian sovereigns, to secure him even against the factions of his subjects.

The first missives from the politic Ferdinand showed Boabdil the value of his friendship. The Catholic monarch reminded him of a treaty which he had made when captured in the city of Loxa. By this, he had engaged, that in case the Catholic sovereigns should capture the cities of Guadix, Baza and Almeria, he would surrender Granada into their hands within a limited time, and accept in exchange certain Moorish towns, to be held by him as their vassal. Ferdinand now informed him that Guadix, Baza and Almeria had fallen; he called upon him, therefore, to fulfil his engagement.

If the unfortunate Boabdil had possessed the will, he had not the power to comply with this demand. He was shut up in the Alhambra, while a tempest of popular fury raged without. Granada was thronged by refugees from the captured towns, many of them disbanded soldiers, and others broken-down citizens, rendered fierce and desperate by ruin. All railed at Boabdil, as the real cause of their misfortunes. How was he to venture forth in such a storm?—above all, how was he to talk to such men of surrender? In his reply to Ferdinand, he represented the difficulties of his situation, and that, so far from having control over his subjects, his very life was in danger from their turbulence. He entreated the king, therefore, to rest satisfied for the present with his recent conquests, promising him that should he be able to regain full empire over his capital and its inhabitants, it would but be to rule over them as vassal to the Castilian crown.

Ferdinand was not to be satisfied with such a reply. The time was come to bring his game of policy to a close, and to consummate his conquest by seating himself on the throne of the Alhambra. Professing to consider Boabdil as a faithless ally, who had broken his plighted word, he discarded him from his friendship, and addressed a second letter, not to that monarch, but to the commanders and council of the city. He demanded a complete surrender of the place, with all the arms in the possession either of the citizens or of others who had recently taken refuge within its walls. If the inhabitants should comply with this summons, he promised them the indulgent terms which had been granted to Baza, Guadix and Almeria; if they should refuse he threatened them with the fate of Malaga.*

The message of the Catholic monarch produced the greatest

* *Cura de los Palacios*, cap. 96.

commotion in the city. The inhabitants of the Alcaiceria, that busy hive of traffic, and all others who had tasted the sweets of gainful commerce during the late cessation of hostilities, were for securing their golden advantages by timely submission: others, who had wives and children, looked on them with tenderness and solicitude, and dreaded, by resistance, to bring upon them the horrors of slavery.

But, on the other hand, Granada was crowded with men from all parts, ruined by the war, exasperated by their sufferings, and eager only for revenge; with others, who had been reared amidst hostilities, who had lived by the sword, and whom a return of peace would leave without home or hope. Beside these, there were others no less fiery and warlike in disposition, but animated by a loftier spirit. These were valiant and haughty cavaliers of the old chivalrous lineages, who had inherited a deadly hatred to the Christians from a long line of warrior ancestors, and to whom the idea was worse than death, that Granada, illustrious Granada! for ages the seat of Moorish grandeur and delight, should become the abode of unbelievers.

Among these cavaliers, the most eminent was Musa ben Abil Gazan. He was of royal lineage, of a proud and generous nature, and a form combining manly strength and beauty. None could excel him in the management of the horse, and dextrous use of all kinds of weapons: his gracefulness and skill in the tourney were the theme of praise among the Moorish dames, and his prowess in the field had made him the terror of the enemy. He had long repined at the timid policy of Boabdil, and had endeavored to counteract its enervating effects, and to keep alive the martial spirit of Granada. For this reason, he had promoted jousts and tiltings with the reed, and all those other public games which bear the semblance of war. He endeavored also to inculcate into his companions in arms those high chivalrous sentiments which lead to valiant and magnanimous deeds, but which are apt to decline with the independence of a nation. The generous efforts of Muza had been in a great measure successful: he was the idol of the youthful cavaliers; they regarded him as a mirror of chivalry, and endeavored to imitate his lofty and heroic virtues.

When Muza heard the demand of Ferdinand that they should deliver up their arms, his eye flashed fire: "Does the Christian king think that we are old men," said he "and that staffs will suffice us?—or that we are women and can be contented

with distaffs? Let him know that a Moor is born to the spear and scimitar; to career the steed, bend the bow, and lanch the javelin: deprive him of these, and you deprive him of his nature. If the Christian king desires our arms, let him come and win them; but let him win them dearly. For my part, sweeter were a grave beneath the walls of Granada, on the spot I had died to defend, than the richest couch within her palaces, earned by submission to the unbeliever."

The words of Muza were received with enthusiastic shouts by the warlike part of the populace. Granada once more awoke, as a warrior shaking off a disgraceful lethargy. The commanders and council partook of the public excitement, and dispatched a reply to the Christian sovereigns, declaring that they would suffer death rather than surrender their city.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HOW KING FERDINAND TURNED HIS HOSTILITIES AGAINST THE CITY OF GRANADA.

WHEN king Ferdinand received the defiance of the Moors, he made preparations for bitter hostilities. The winter season did not admit of an immediate campaign; he contented himself, therefore, with throwing strong garrisons into all his towns and fortresses in the neighborhood of Granada, and gave the command of all the frontier of Jaen to Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, count of Tendilla, who had shown such consummate vigilance and address in maintaining the dangerous post of Alhama. This renowned veteran established his headquarters in the mountain city of Alcala la Real, within eight leagues of the city of Granada, and commanding the most important passes of that rugged frontier.

In the mean time, the city of Granada resounded with the stir of war. The chivalry of the nation had again control of its councils; and the populace, having once more resumed their weapons, were anxious to wipe out the disgrace of their late passive submission, by signal and daring exploits.

Muza ben Abil Gazan was the soul of action. He commanded the cavalry, which he had disciplined with uncom-

mon skill: he was surrounded by the noblest youth of Granada, who had caught his own generous and martial fire, and panted for the field; while the common soldiers, devoted to his person, were ready to follow him in the most desperate enterprises. He did not allow their courage to cool for want of action. The gates of Granada once more poured forth legions of light scouring cavalry, which skirred the country up to the very gates of the Christian fortresses, sweeping off flocks and herds. The name of Muza became formidable throughout the frontier; he had many encounters with the enemy in the rough passes of the mountains, in which the superior lightness and dexterity of his cavalry gave him the advantage. The sight of his glistening legion, returning across the vega with long cavalgadas of booty, was hailed by the Moors as a revival of their ancient triumphs; but when they beheld Christian banners borne into their gates as trophies, the exultation of the light-minded populace was beyond all bounds.

The winter passed away; the spring advanced, yet Ferdinand delayed to take the field. He knew the city of Granada to be too strong and populous to be taken by assault, and too full of provisions to be speedily reduced by siege. "We must have patience and perseverance," said the politic monarch; "by ravaging the country this year, we shall produce a scarcity the next, and then the city may be invested with effect.

An interval of peace, aided by the quick vegetation of a prolific soil and happy climate, had restored the vega to all its luxuriance and beauty; the green pastures on the borders of the Xenel were covered with flocks and herds; the blooming orchards gave promise of abundant fruit, and the open plain was waving with ripening corn. The time was at hand to put in the sickle and reap the golden harvest, when suddenly a torrent of war came sweeping down from the mountains; and Ferdinand, with an army of five thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, appeared before the walls of Granada. He had left the queen and princess at the fortress of Moclin, and came attended by the duke of Medina Sidonia, the marques of Cadiz, the marques de Villena, the counts of Ureña and Cabra, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and other renowned cavaliers. On this occasion, king Ferdinand for the first time led his son, prince Juan, into the field, and bestowed upon him the dignity of knighthood. As if to stimulate him to

grand achievements, the ceremony took place on the banks of the grand canal, almost beneath the embattled walls of that warlike city, the object of such daring enterprises, and in the midst of that famous vega which had been the field of so many chivalrous exploits. Above them shone resplendent the red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst delicious groves, with the standard of Mahomet waving defiance to the Christian arms.

The duke of Medina Sidonia, and the valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, were sponsors; and all the chivalry of the camp was assembled on the occasion. The prince, after he was knighted, bestowed the same honor on several youthful cavaliers of high rank, just entering, like himself, on the career of arms.

Ferdinand did not loiter, in carrying his desolating plans into execution. He detached parties in every direction, to lay waste the country; villages were sacked, burnt, and destroyed, and the lovely vega once more laid waste with fire and sword. The ravage was carried so close to Granada, that the city was wrapped in the smoke of its gardens and hamlets. The dismal cloud rolled up the hill and hung about the towers of the Alhambra, where the unfortunate Boabdil still remained shut up from the indignation of his subjects. The hapless monarch smote his breast, as he looked down from his mountain palace on the desolation effected by his late ally. He dared not even show himself in arms among the populace, for they cursed him as the cause of the miseries once more brought to their doors.

The Moors, however, did not suffer the Christians to carry on their ravages as unmolested as in former years. Muza incited them to incessant sallies. He divided his cavalry into small squadrons, each led by a daring commander. They were taught to hover round the Christian camp; to harass it from various and opposite quarters, cutting off convoys and straggling detachments; to waylay the army in its ravaging expeditions, lurking among rocks and passes of the mountains, or in hollows and thickets of the plain, and practising a thousand stratagems and surprises.

The Christian army had one day spread itself out rather unguardedly, in its foraging about the vega. As the troops commanded by the marques of Villena approached the skirts of the mountains, they beheld a number of Moorish peasants hastily driving a herd of cattle into a narrow glen. The sol-

diers, eager for booty, pressed in pursuit of them. Scarcely had they entered the glen, when shouts arose from every side, and they were furiously attacked by an ambuscade of horse and foot. Some of the Christians took to flight; others stood their ground, and fought valiantly. The Moors had the vantage-ground; some showered darts and arrows from the cliffs of the rocks, others fought hand to hand on the plain; while their cavalry, rapid as lightning in their movements, carried havoc and confusion into the midst of the Christian forces.

The marques de Villena, with his brother Don Alonzo de Pacheco, at the first onset of the Moors, spurred into the hottest of the fight. They had scarce entered, when Don Alonzo was struck lifeless from his horse, before the eyes of his brother. Estevan de Luzon, a gallant captain, fell fighting bravely by the side of the marques, who remained, with his chamberlain Solier and a handful of knights, surrounded by the enemy. Several cavaliers from other parts of the army hastened to their assistance, when King Ferdinand, seeing that the Moors had the vantage-ground and that the Christians were suffering severely, gave signal for retreat. The marques obeyed slowly and reluctantly, for his heart was full of grief and rage at the death of his brother. As he was retiring, he beheld his faithful chamberlain Solier defending himself valiantly against six Moors. The marques turned, and rushed to his rescue; he killed two of the enemy with his own hand, and put the rest to flight. One of the Moors, however, in retreating, rose in his stirrups, and, hurling his lance at the marques, wounded him in the right arm and crippled him for life.*

Such was one of the many ambuscadoes concerted by Muza; nor did he hesitate at times to present a bold front to the Christian forces, and to defy them in the open field. King Ferdinand soon perceived, however, that the Moors seldom provoked a battle without having the advantage of the ground; and that though the Christians generally appeared to have the victory, they suffered the greatest loss; for retreating was a part of the Moorish system, by which they would draw their

* In consequence of this wound, the marques was ever after obliged to write his signature with his left hand, though capable of managing his lance with his right. The queen one day demanded of him, why he had adventured his life for that of a domestic? "Does not your majesty think," replied he, "that I ought to risk one life for him who would have adventured three for me had he possessed them?" The queen was charmed with the magnanimity of the reply, and often quoted the marques as an heroic example to the chivalry of the age.—*Mariana*, lib. 25. c. 15.

pursuers into confusion, and then turn upon them with a more violent and fatal attack. He commanded his captains, therefore, to decline all challenges to skirmish, and to pursue a sure system of destruction, ravaging the country, and doing all possible injury to the enemy, with slight risk to themselves.

CHAPTER XL.

THE FATE OF THE CASTLE OF ROMA.

ABOUT two leagues from Granada, on an eminence commanding an extensive view of the vega, stood the strong Moorish castle of Roma, a great place of refuge and security. Hither the neighboring peasantry drove their flocks and herds, and hurried with their most precious effects, on the irruption of a Christian force; and any foraging or skirmishing party from Granada, on being intercepted in their return, threw themselves into Roma, manned its embattled towers, and set the enemy at defiance. The garrison were accustomed to these sudden claims upon their protection; to have parties of Moors clattering up to their gates, so hotly pursued that there was barely time to throw open the portal, receive them within, and shut out their pursuers; while the Christian cavaliers had many a time reined in their panting steeds at the very entrance of the barbican, and retired, cursing the strong walls of Roma, that robbed them of their prey.

The late ravages of Ferdinand, and the continual skirmishings in the vega, had roused the vigilance of the castle. One morning early, as the sentinels kept watch upon the battlements, they beheld a cloud of dust advancing rapidly from a distance: turbans and Moorish weapons soon caught their eyes; and as the whole approached, they descried a drove of cattle, urged on in great haste, and convoyed by one hundred and fifty Moors, who led with them two Christian captives in chains.

When the cavalgada had arrived near to the castle, a Moorish cavalier, of noble and commanding mien and splendid attire, rode up to the foot of the tower, and entreated admittance. He stated that they were returning with rich booty from a foray into the lands of the Christians, but that the enemy was on their traces, and they feared to be overtaken

before they could reach Granada. The sentinels descended in all haste, and flung open the gates. The long cavalgada defiled into the courts of the castle, which were soon filled with lowing and bleating flocks and herds, with neighing and stamping steeds, and with fierce-looking Moors from the mountains. The cavalier who had asked admission was the chief of the party; he was somewhat advanced in life, of a lofty and gallant bearing, and had with him a son, a young man of great fire and spirit. Close by them followed the two Christian captives, with looks cast down and disconsolate.

The soldiers of the garrison had roused themselves from their sleep, and were busily occupied attending to the cattle which crowded the courts; while the foraging party distributed themselves about the castle, to seek refreshment or repose. Suddenly a shout arose, that was echoed from courtyard, and hall, and battlement. The garrison, astonished and bewildered, would have rushed to their arms, but found themselves, almost before they could make resistance, completely in the power of an enemy.

The pretended foraging party consisted of Mudexares, or Moors tributary to the Christians; and the commanders were the prince Cidi Yahye, and his son Alnayer. They had hastened from the mountains with this small force, to aid the Catholic sovereigns during the summer's campaign; and they had concerted to surprise this important castle, and present it to King Ferdinand, as a gage of their faith, and the first fruits of their devotion.

The polite monarch overwhelmed his new converts and allies with favors and distinctions, in return for this important acquisition; but he took care to despatch a strong force of veteran and genuine Christian troops, to man the fortress.

As to the Moors who had composed the garrison, Cidi Yahye remembered that they were his country-men, and could not prevail upon himself to deliver them into Christian bondage. He set them at liberty, and permitted them to repair to Granada;—"a proof," says the pious Agapida, "that his conversion was not entirely consummated, but that there were still some lingerings of the infidel in his heart." His lenity was far from procuring him indulgence in the opinions of his country-men; on the contrary, the inhabitants of Granada, when they learnt from the liberated garrison the stratagem by which Roma had been captured, cursed Cidi Yahye for a traitor; and the garrison joined in the malediction.

But the indignation of the people of Granada was destined to be aroused to tenfold violence. The old warrior Muley Abdalla el Zagal had retired to his little mountain territory, and for a short time endeavored to console himself with his petty title of king of Andarax. He soon grew impatient, however, of the quiet and inaction of his mimic kingdom. His fierce spirit was exasperated by being shut up within such narrow limits, and his hatred rose to downright fury against Boabdil, whom he considered as the cause of his downfall. When tidings were brought him that king Ferdinand was laying waste the vega, he took a sudden resolution. Assembling the whole disposable force of his kingdom, which amounted but to two hundred men, he descended from the Alpuxarras and sought the Christian camp, content to serve as a vassal the enemy of his faith and his nation, so that he might see Granada wrested from the sway of his nephew.

In his blind passion, the old wrathful monarch injured his cause, and strengthened the cause of his adversary. The Moors of Granada had been clamorous in his praise, extolling him as a victim to his patriotism, and had refused to believe all reports of his patriotism, and had refused to believe all reports of his treaty with the Christians; but when they beheld from the walls of the city, his banner mingling with the banners of the unbelievers, and arrayed against his late people, and the capital he had commanded, they broke forth into curses and revilings, and heaped all kind of stigmas upon his name.

Their next emotion, of course, was in favor of Boabdil. They gathered under the walls of the Alhambra, and hailed him as their only hope, as the sole dependence of the country. Boabdil could scarcely believe his senses, when he heard his name mingled with praises and greeted with acclamations. Encouraged by this unexpected gleam of popularity, he ventured forth from his retreat, and was received with rapture. All his past errors were attributed to the hardships of his fortune, and the usurpation of his tyrant uncle; and whatever breath the populace could spare from uttering curses on El Zagal, was expended in shouts in honor of El Chico.

CHAPTER XLI.

HOW BOABDIL EL CHICO TOOK THE FIELD; AND HIS EXPEDITION
AGAINST ALHENDIN.

FOR thirty days had the vega been overrun by the Christian forces; and that vast plain, late so luxuriant and beautiful, was one wide scene of desolation. The destroying army, having accomplished its task, passed over the ridge of Pinos and wound up into the mountains, on the way to Cordova, bearing away the spoils of towns and villages, and driving off flocks and herds in long dusty columns. The sound of the last Christian trumpet died away along the side of the mountain of Elvira, and not a hostile squadron was seen glistening on the mournful fields of the vega.

The eyes of Boabdil el Chico were at length opened to the real policy of king Ferdinand, and he saw that he had no longer any thing to depend upon but the valor of his arm. No time was to be lost in hastening to counteract the effect of the late Christian ravage, and in opening the channel for distant supplies to Granada.

Scarcely had the retiring squadrons of Ferdinand disappeared among the mountains, when Boabdil buckled on his armor, sallied forth from the Alhambra, and prepared to take the field. When the populace beheld him actually in arms against his late ally, both parties thronged with zeal to his standard. The hardy inhabitants also of the Sierra Nevada, or chain of snow-capped mountains which rise above Granada, descended from their heights, and hastened into the city gates, to proffer their devotion to their youthful king. The great square of the Vivarrambla shone with the proud array of legions of cavalry, decked with the colors and devices of the most ancient Moorish families, and marshalled forth by the patriot Muza to follow the king to battle.

It was on the 15th of June that Boabdil once more issued forth from the gates of Granada on martial enterprise. A few leagues from the city, within full view of it, and at the entrance of the Alpuxarra mountains, stood the powerful castle of Alhendin. It was built on an eminence, rising from the midst of a small town, and commanding a great part of the

vega, and the main road to the rich valleys of the Alpuxarras. The castle was commanded by a valiant Christian cavalier named Mendo de Quexada, and garrisoned by two hundred and fifty men, all seasoned and experienced warriors. It was a continual thorn in the side of Granada: the laborers of the vega were swept off from their fields, by its hardy soldiers; cenvoys were cut off, in the passes of the mountains; and as the garrison commanded a full view of the gates of the city, no band of merchants could venture forth on their needful journeys, without being swooped up by the war-hawks of Alhendin.

It was against this important fortress, that Boabdil led his troops. For six days and nights, the fortress was closely besieged. The alcaide and his veteran garrison defended themselves valiantly, but they were exhausted by fatigue and constant watchfulness; for the Moors, being continually relieved by fresh troops from Granada, kept up an unremitted and vigorous attack. Twice the barbican was forced, and twice the assailants were driven forth headlong with excessive loss. The garrison, however, was diminished in number by the killed and wounded; there were no longer soldiers sufficient to man the walls and gateway; and the brave alcaide was compelled to retire, with his surviving force, to the keep of the castle, in which he continued to make desperate resistance.

The Moors now approached the foot of the tower, under shelter of wooden screens covered with wet hides, to ward off missiles and combustibles. They went to work vigorously to undermine the tower, placing props of wood under the foundations, to be afterwards set on fire, so as to give the besiegers time to escape before the edifice should fall. Some of the Moors plied their cross-bows and arquebusses to defend the workmen, and to drive the Christians from the wall; while the latter showered down stones, and darts, and melted pitch, and flaming combustibles, on the miners.

The brave Mendo de Quexada had cast many an anxious eye across the vega, in hopes of seeing some Christian force hastening to his assistance. Not a gleam of spear or helm was to be descried, for no one had dreamt of this sudden irruption of the Moors. The alcaide beheld his bravest men dead or wounded around him, while the remainder were sinking with watchfulness and fatigue. In defiance of all opposition, the Moors had accomplished their mine; the fire was brought before the walls, that was to be applied to the stanchions, in case

the garrison persisted in defence. In a little while, the tower would crumble beneath him, and be rent and hurled a ruin to the plain. At the very last moment, the brave alcayde made the signal of surrender. He marched forth with the remnant of his veteran garrison, who were all made prisoners. Boabdil immediately ordered the walls of the fortress to be razed, and fire to be applied to the stanchions, that the place might never again become a strong-hold to the Christians, and a scourge to Granada. The alcayde and his fellow-captives were led in dejected convoy across the vega, when they heard a tremendous crash behind them. They turned to look upon their late fortress, but beheld nothing but a heap of tumbling ruins, and a vast column of smoke and dust, where once had stood the lofty tower of Alhendin.

CHAPTER XLII.

EXPLOIT OF THE COUNT DE TENDILLA.

BOABDIL EL CHICO followed up his success, by capturing the two fortresses of Marchena and Buldy; he sent his alfaquis in every direction, to proclaim a holy war, and to summon all true Moslems of town or castle, mountain or valley, to saddle steed and buckle on armor, and hasten to the standard of the faith. The tidings spread far and wide, that Boabdil el Chico was once more in the field, and was victorious. The Moors of various places, dazzled by this gleam of success, hastened to throw off their sworn allegiance to the Castilian crown, and to elevate the standard of Boabdil; and the youthful monarch flattered himself that the whole kingdom was on the point of returning to its allegiance.

The fiery cavaliers of Granada were eager to renew those forays into the Christian lands, in which they had formerly delighted. A number of them therefore concerted an irruption to the north, into the territory of Jaen, to harass the country about Quezada. They had heard of a rich convoy of merchants and wealthy travellers, on the way to the city of Baza; and they anticipated a glorious conclusion to their foray, in capturing this convoy.

Assembling a number of horsemen, lightly armed and fleetly

mounted, and one hundred foot-soldiers, these hardy cavaliers issued forth by night from Granada, made their way in silence through the defiles of the mountains, crossed the frontier without opposition, and suddenly appeared, as if fallen from the clouds, in the very heart of the Christian country.

The mountainous frontier which separates Granada from Jaen was at this time under the command of the count de Tendilla, the same veteran who had distinguished himself by his vigilance and sagacity when commanding the fortress of Alhama. He held his head-quarters at the city of Alcala la Real, in its impregnable fortress, perched high among the mountains, about six leagues from Granada, and dominating all the frontier. From this cloud-capt hold among the rocks, he kept an eagle eye upon Granada, and had his scouts and spies in all directions, so that a crow could not fly over the border without his knowledge. His fortress was a place of refuge for the Christian captives who escaped by night from the Moorish dungeons of Granada. Often, however, they misused their way in the defiles of the mountains, and, wandering about bewildered, either repaired by mistake to some Moorish town, or were discovered and retaken at daylight by the enemy. To prevent these accidents, the count had a tower built at his own expense, on the top of one of the heights near Alcala, which commanded a view of the vega and the surrounding country. Here he kept a light blazing throughout the night, as a beacon for all Christian fugitives, to guide them to a place of safety.

The count was aroused one night from his repose, by shouts and cries, which came up from the town and approached the castle walls. "To arms! to arms! the Moor is over the border!" was the cry. A Christian soldier, pale and emaciated, and who still bore traces of the Moorish chains, was brought before the count. He had been taken as guide by the Moorish cavaliers who had sallied from Granada, but had escaped from them among the mountains, and, after much wandering, had found his way to Alcala, by the signal-fire.

Notwithstanding the bustle and agitation of the moment, the count de Tendilla listened calmly and attentively to the account of the fugitive, and questioned him minutely as to the time of departure of the Moors, and the rapidity and direction of their march. He saw that it was too late to prevent their incursion and ravage; but he determined to await them, and give them a warm reception on their return. His soldiers

were always on the alert, and ready to take the field at a moment's warning. Choosing one hundred and fifty lances, hardy and valiant men, well disciplined and well seasoned, as indeed were all his troops, he issued forth quietly before break of day, and, descending through the defiles of the mountains, stationed his little force in ambush, in a deep barranca, or dry channel of a torrent, near Barzina, but three leagues from Granada, on the road by which the marauders would have to return. In the mean time, he sent out scouts, to posts themselves upon different heights, and look out for the approach of enemy.

All day they remained concealed in the ravine, and for a great part of the following night; not a turban, however, was to be seen, excepting now and then a peasant returning from his labor, or a solitary muleteer hastening towards Granada. The cavaliers of the count began to grow restless and impatient; they feared that the enemy might have taken some other route, or might have received intelligence of their ambuscade. They urged the count to abandon the enterprise, and return to Alcala. "We are here," said they, "almost at the gates of the Moorish capital; our movements may have been descried, and, before we are aware, Granada may pour forth its legions of swift cavalry, and crush us with an overwhelming force." The count de Tendilla, however, persisted in remaining until his scouts should come in. About two hours before daybreak, there were signal-fires on certain Moorish watch-towers of the mountains. While they were regarding these with anxiety, the scouts came hurrying into the ravine: "The Moors are approaching," said they; "we have reconnoitred them near at hand. They are between one and two hundred strong, but encumbered with many prisoners and much booty." The Christian cavaliers laid their ears to the ground, and heard the distant tramp of horses and the tread of foot-soldiers. They mounted their horses, braced their shields, couched their lances, and drew near to the entrance of the ravine where it opened upon the road.

The Moors had succeeded in waylaying and surprising the Christian convoy, on its way to Baza. They had captured a great number of prisoners, male and female, with great store of gold and jewels, and sumpter mules laden with rich merchandise. With these they had made a forced march over the dangerous parts of the mountains; but now, finding themselves so near to Granada, they fancied themselves in perfect security.

They loitered along the road, therefore, irregularly and slowly, some singing, others laughing and exulting at having eluded the boasted vigilance of the count de Tendilla; while ever and anon were heard the plaint of some female captive bewailing the jeopardy of her honor; and the heavy sighing of the merchant at beholding his property in the grasp of ruthless spoilers.

The count de Tendilla waited until some of the escort had passed the ravine; then, giving the signal for assault, his cavaliers set up great shouts and cries, and charged furiously into the centre of the foe. The obscurity of the place and the hour added to the terrors of the surprise. The Moors were thrown into confusion; some rallied, fought desperately, and fell covered with wounds. Thirty-six were killed, and fifty-five were made prisoners; the rest, under cover of the darkness, made their escape to the rocks and defiles of the mountains.

The good count unbound the prisoners, gladdening the hearts of the merchants by restoring to them their merchandise. To the female captives also he restored the jewels of which they had been despoiled, excepting such as had been lost beyond recovery. Forty-five saddle horses, of the choice Barbary breed, remained as captured spoils of the Moors, together with costly armor, and booty of various kinds. Having collected every thing in haste, and arranged his cavalgada, the count urged his way with all speed for Alcala la Real, lest he should be pursued and overtaken by the Moors of Granada. As he wound up the steep ascent to his mountain city, the inhabitants poured forth to meet him with shouts of joy. His triumph was doubly enhanced by being received at the gates of the city by his wife, the daughter of the marques of Villena, a lady of distinguished merit, whom he had not seen for two years, that he had been separated from his home by the arduous duties of these iron wars.

CHAPTER XLIII.

EXPEDITION OF BOABDIL EL CHICO AGAINST SALOBREÑA—EXPLOIT OF HERNANDO PEREZ DEL PULGAR.

KING BOABDIL found that his diminished territory was too closely dominated by Christian fortresses like Alcala la Real, and too strictly watched by vigilant alcaides like the count of

Tendilla, to be able to maintain itself by internal resources. His foraging expeditions were liable to be intercepted and defeated, while the ravage of the vega had swept off every thing on which the city depended for future sustenance. He felt the want of a sea-port, through which, as formerly, he might keep open a communication with Africa, and obtain reinforcements and supplies from beyond the sea. All the ports and harbors were in the hands of the Christians, and Granada and its remnant of dependent territory were completely landlocked.

In this emergency, the attention of Boabdil was called by circumstances to the sea-port of Salobreña. This redoubtable town has already been mentioned in this chronicle, as a place deemed impregnable by the Moors; insomuch that their kings were accustomed, in time of peril, to keep their treasures in its citadel. It was situated on a rocky hill, dividing one of those rich little vegas or plains which lie open to the Mediterranean, but run like deep green bays into the stern bosoms of the mountains. The vega was covered with beautiful vegetation, with rice and cotton, with groves of oranges, citrons, figs and mulberries, and with gardens enclosed by hedges of reeds, of aloes and the Indian fig. Running streams of cool water from the springs and snows of the Sierra Nevada, kept this delightful valley continually fresh and verdant; while it was almost locked up by mountain barriers, and lofty promontories that stretched far into the sea.

Through the centre of this rich vega, the rock of Salobreña reared its rugged back, nearly dividing the plain, and advancing to the margin of the sea, with just a strip of sandy beach at its foot, laved by the blue waves of the Mediterranean.

The town covered the ridge and sides of the rocky hill, and was fortified by strong walls and towers; while on the highest and most precipitous part stood the citadel, a huge castle that seemed to form a part of the living rock; the massive ruins of which, at the present day, attract the gaze of the traveller, as he winds his way far below, along the road which passes through the vega.

This important fortress had been intrusted to the command of Don Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, captain-general of the artillery, and the most scientific of all the Spanish leaders. That experienced veteran, however, was with the king at Cordova, having left a valiant cavalier as alcaide of the place.

Boabdil el Chico had full information of the state of the gar-

rison and the absence of its commander. Putting himself at the head of a powerful force, therefore, he departed from Granada, and made a rapid march through the mountains; hoping, by this sudden move, to seize upon Salobreña before king Ferdinand could come to its assistance.

The inhabitants of Salobreña were Mudexares, or Moors who had sworn allegiance to the Christians. Still, when they heard the sound of the Moorish drums and trumpets, and beheld the squadrons of their countrymen advancing across the vega, their hearts yearned towards the standard of their nation and their faith. A tumult arose in the place; the populace shouted the name of Boabdil el Chico, and, throwing open the gates, admitted him within the walls.

The Christian garrison was too few in number to contend for the possession of the town; they retreated to the citadel, and shut themselves within its massive walls, which were considered impregnable. Here they maintained a desperate defence, hoping to hold out until succor should arrive from the neighboring fortresses.

The tidings that Salobreña was invested by the Moorish king, spread along the sea-coast, and filled the Christians with alarm. Don Francisco Enriquez, uncle of the king, commanded the city of Velez Malaga, about twelve leagues distant, but separated by ranges of those vast rocky mountains which are piled along the Mediterranean, and tower in steep promontories and precipices above its waves.

Don Francisco summoned the alcaides of his district to hasten with him to the relief of this important fortress. A number of cavaliers and their retainers answered to his call, among whom was Fernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed "El de las Hazanas," (he of the exploits,)—the same who had signalized himself in a foray, by elevating a handkerchief on a lance for a banner, and leading on his disheartened comrades to victory. As soon as Don Francisco beheld a little band collected round him, he set out with all speed for Salobreña. The march was rugged and severe, climbing and descending immense mountains, and sometimes winding along the edge of giddy precipices, with the surges of the sea raging far below. When Don Francisco arrived with his followers at the lofty promontory that stretches along one side of the little vega of Salobreña, he looked down with sorrow and anxiety upon a Moorish army of great force encamped at the foot of the fortress, while Moorish banners, on various parts of the walls, showed that the town

was already in possession of the infidels. A solitary Christian standard alone floated on the top of the castle-keep, showing that the brave garrison were hemmed up in their rock-built citadel.

Don Francisco found it impossible, with his small force, to make any impression on the camp of the Moors, or to get to the relief of the castle. He stationed his little band upon a rocky height near the sea, where they were safe from the assaults of the enemy. The sight of his friendly banner waving in their neighborhood cheered the heart of the garrison, and conveyed to them assurance of speedy succor from the king.

In the mean time, Fernando Perez del Pulgar, who always burned to distinguish himself by bold and striking exploits, in the course of a prowling expedition along the borders of the Moorish camp, remarked a postern-gate of the castle, opening upon the steep part of the rocky hill which looked towards the mountains.

A sudden thought flashed upon the daring mind of Pulgar:—"Who will follow my banner," said he, "and make a dash for yonder postern?" A bold proposition, in time of warfare, never wants for bold spirits to accept it. Seventy resolute men immediately stepped forward. Pulgar put himself at their head; they cut their way suddenly through a weak part of the camp, fought their way up to the gate, which was eagerly thrown open to receive them; and succeeded in making their way into the fortress, before the alarm of their attempt had spread through the Moorish army.

The garrison was roused to new spirit by this unlooked-for reinforcement, and were enabled to make a more vigorous resistance. The Moors had intelligence, however, that there was a great scarcity of water in the castle; and they exulted in the idea that this additional number of warriors would soon exhaust the cisterns, and compel them to surrender. When Pulgar heard of this hope entertained by the enemy, he caused a bucket of water to be lowered from the battlements, and threw a silver cup in bravado to the Moors.

The situation of the garrison, however, was daily growing more and more critical; they suffered greatly from thirst, while, to tantalize them in their sufferings, they beheld limpid streams winding in abundance through the green plain below them. They began to fear that all succor would arrive too late, when one day they beheld a little squadron of vessels far at sea, but standing towards the shore. There was some doubt

at first whether it might not be a hostile armament from Africa; but as it approached, they descried, to their great joy, the banner of Castile.

It was a reinforcement, brought in all haste by the governor of the fortress, Don Francisco Ramirez. The squadron anchored at a steep rocky island, which rises from the very margin of the smooth sandy beach, directly in front of the rock of Salobreña, and stretches out into the sea. On this island Ramirez landed his men, and was as strongly posted as if in a fortress. His force was too scanty to attempt a battle, but he assisted to harass and distract the besiegers. Whenever king Boabdil made an attack upon the fortress, his camp was assailed on one side by the troops of Ramirez, who landed from their island, and on another by those of Don Francisco Enriquez, who swept down from their rock, while Fernando del Pulgar kept up a fierce defence, from every tower and battlement of the castle.

The attention of the Moorish king was diverted, also, for a time, by an ineffectual attempt to relieve the little port of Adra, which had recently declared in his favor, but which had been recaptured for the Christians by Cidi Yahye and his son Alnayar. Thus the unlucky Boabdil, bewildered on every hand, lost all the advantage that he had gained by his rapid march from Granada. While he was yet besieging the obstinate citadel, tidings were brought him that king Ferdinand was in full march with a powerful host, to its assistance. There was no time for further delay; he made a furious attack with all his forces upon the castle, but was again repulsed by Pulgar and his coadjutors; when, abandoning the siege in despair, he retreated with his army, lest king Ferdinand should get between him and his capital. On his way back to Granada, however, he in some sort consoled himself for his late disappointment, by overrunning a part of the territories and possessions lately assigned to his uncle El Zagal, and to Cidi Yahye. He defeated their alcaides, destroyed several of their fortresses, burnt their villages, and leaving the country behind him reeking and smoking with his vengeance, returned with considerable booty, to repose himself within the walls of the Alhambra.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HOW KING FERDINAND TREATED THE PEOPLE OF GUADIX—AND
HOW EL ZAGAL FINISHED HIS REGAL CAREER.

SCARCELY had Boabdil ensconced himself in his capital, when king Ferdinand, at the head of seven thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, again appeared in the vega. He had set out in all haste from Cordova to the relief of Salobreña; but, hearing on his march that the siege was raised, he turned with his army to make a second ravage round the walls of devoted Granada. His present forage lasted fifteen days, in the course of which every thing that had escaped his former desolating visit was destroyed, and scarce a green thing or a living animal was left on the face of the land. The Moors sallied frequently, and fought desperately, in defence of their fields, but the work of destruction was accomplished—and Granada, once the queen of gardens, was left surrounded by a desert.

From hence Ferdinand marched to crush a conspiracy which had lately manifested itself in the cities of Guadix, Baza, and Almeria. These recently conquered places had entered into secret correspondence with king Boabdil, inviting him to march to their gates, promising to rise upon the Christian garrisons, seize upon the citadels, and surrender themselves into his power. The marques of Villena had received notice of the conspiracy, and had suddenly thrown himself, with a large force, into Guadix. Under pretence of making a review of the inhabitants, he made them sally forth into the fields before the city. When the whole Moorish population capable of bearing arms was thus without the walls, he ordered the gates to be closed. He then permitted them to enter, two by two and three by three, and to take forth their wives, children, and effects. The houseless Moors were fain to make themselves temporary hovels, in the gardens and orchards about the city; they were clamorous in their complaints at being thus excluded from their homes, but were told they must wait with patience until the charges against them could be investigated, and the pleasure of the king be known.*

* Zurita, lib. 20, c. 85. *Cura de los Palacios*, c. 97.

When Ferdinand arrived at Guadix, he found the unhappy Moors in their cabins among the orchards. They complained bitterly of the deception that had been practised among them, and implored permission to return to the city, and live peaceably in their dwellings, as had been promised them in their articles of capitulation.

King Ferdinand listened graciously to their complaints: "My friends," said he, in reply, "I am informed that there has been a conspiracy among you to kill my alcaide and garrison, and to take part with my enemy the king of Granada. I shall make a thorough investigation of this conspiracy. Those among you who shall be proved innocent shall be restored to their dwellings, but the guilty shall incur the penalty of their offences. As I wish, however, to proceed with mercy as well as justice, I now give you your choice, either to depart at once without further question, going wherever you please, and taking with you your families and effects, under an assurance of safety; or to deliver up those who are guilty, not one of whom, I give you my royal word, shall escape punishment."

When the people of Guadix heard these words, they communed among themselves; and as most of them (says the worthy Agapida) were either culpable or feared to be considered so, they accepted the alternative, and departed sorrowfully, they and their wives and their little ones. "Thus," in the words of that excellent and cotemporary historian, Andres Bernaldez, commonly called the curate of Los Palacios—"thus did the king deliver Guadix from the hands of the enemies of our holy faith, after seven hundred and seventy years that it had been in their possession, ever since the time of Roderick the Goth; and this was one of the mysteries of our Lord, who would not consent that the city should remain longer in the power of the Moors:"—a pious and sage remark, which is quoted with peculiar approbation by the worthy Agapida.

King Ferdinand offered similar alternatives to the Moors of Baza, Almeria, and other cities accused of participation in this conspiracy; who generally preferred to abandon their homes, rather than incur the risk of an investigation. Most of them relinquished Spain, as a country where they could no longer live in security and independence, and departed with their families for Africa; such as remained were suffered to live in villages and hamlets, and other unwallled places.*

* Garibay, lib. 13, cap. 39. Pulgar, part 3, cap. 132.

While Ferdinand was thus occupied at Guadix, dispensing justice and mercy, and receiving cities in exchange, the old monarch Muley Abdalla, surnamed El Zagal, appeared before him. He was haggard with care, and almost crazed with passion. He had found his little territory of Andarax, and his two thousand subjects, as difficult to govern as had been the distracted kingdom of Granada. The charm, which had bound the Moors to him, was broken when he appeared in arms under the banner of Ferdinand. He had returned from his inglorious campaign with his petty army of two hundred men, followed by the execrations of the people of Granada, and the secret repining of those he had led into the field. No sooner had his subjects heard of the successes of Boabdil el Chico, than they had siezed their arms, assembled tumultuously, declared for the young monarch, and threatened the life of El Zagal.* The unfortunate old king had with difficulty evaded their fury; and this last lesson seemed entirely to have cured him of his passion for sovereignty. He now entreated Ferdinand to purchase the towns and castles and other possessions which had been granted to him; offering them at a low rate, and begging safe passage for himself and his followers to Africa. King Ferdinand graciously complied with his wishes. He purchased of him three-and-twenty towns and villages in the valleys of Andarax and Alhaurin, for which he gave him five millions of maravedies. El Zagal relinquished his right to one half of the salinas or salt-pits of Maleha, in favor of his brother-in-law Cidi Yahye. Having thus disposed of his petty empire and possessions, he packed up all his treasure, of which he had a great amount, and, followed by many Moorish families, passed over to Africa.†

And here let us cast an eye beyond the present period of our chronicle, and trace the remaining career of El Zagal. His short and turbulent reign, and disastrous end, would afford a wholesome lesson to unprincipled ambition, were not all ambition of the kind fated to be blind to precept and example. When he arrived in Africa, instead of meeting with kindness and sympathy, he was seized and thrown into prison by the king of Fez, as though he had been his vassal. He was accused of being the cause of the dissensions and downfall of the kingdom of Granada; and the accusation being proved to the satisfaction of the king of Fez, he condemned the unhappy El

* *Cura de los Palacios*, cap. 27.† *Conde*, part 4, cap. 41.

Zagal to perpetual darkness. A basin of glowing copper was passed before his eyes, which effectually destroyed his sight. His wealth, which had probably been the secret cause of these cruel measures, was confiscated and seized upon by his oppressor; and El Zagal was thrust forth, blind, helpless, and destitute, upon the world. In this wretched condition, the late Moorish monarch groped his way through the regions of Tingitania, until he reached the city of Velez de Gomera. The king of Velez had formerly been his ally, and felt some movement of compassion at his present altered and abject state. He gave him food and raiment, and suffered him to remain unmolested in his dominions. Death, which so often hurries off the prosperous and happy from the midst of untasted pleasures, spares, on the other hand, the miserable, to drain the last drop of his cup of bitterness. El Zagal dragged out a wretched existence of many years, in the city of Velez. He wandered about blind and disconsolate, an object of mingled scorn and pity, and bearing above his raiment a parchment, on which was written in Arabic, "This is the unfortunate king of Andalusia."*

CHAPTER XLV.

PREPARATIONS OF GRANADA FOR A DESPERATE DEFENCE.

How is thy strength departed, oh Granada? how is thy beauty withered and despoiled, oh city of groves and fountains! The commerce that once thronged thy streets is at an end; the merchant no longer hastens to thy gates, with the luxuries of foreign lands. The cities which once paid thee tribute are wrested from thy sway; the chivalry which filled thy Vivarrambla with the sumptuous pageantry of war, have fallen in many battles. The Alhambra still rears its ruddy towers from the midst of groves, but melancholy reigns in its marble halls; and the monarch looks down from his lofty balconies upon a naked waste, where once had extended the blooming glories of the vega!

Such is the lament of the Moorish writers, over the lament-

* Marmol, de Rebelione Maur. lib. 1, cap. 16. Padraza, Hist. Granat, part 3, c. 4. Suarez, Hist. de Obispos de Guadix y Baza, cap. 10.

able state of Granada, which now remained a mere phantom of its former greatness. The two ravages of the vega, following so closely upon each other, had swept off all the produce of the year; and the husbandman had no longer the heart to till the field, seeing that the ripening harvest only brought the spoiler to the door.

During the winter season, king Ferdinand made diligent preparations for the last campaign, that was to decide the fate of Granada. As this war was waged purely for the promotion of the Christian faith, he thought it meet that its enemies should bear the expenses. He levied, therefore, a general contribution upon all the Jews throughout his kingdom, by synagogues and districts; and obliged them to render in the proceeds, at the city of Seville.*

On the 11th of April, Ferdinand and Isabella departed for the Moorish frontier, with the solemn determination to lay close siege to Granada, and never to quit its walls until they had planted the standard of the faith on the towers of the Alhambra. Many of the nobles of the kingdom, particularly those from the parts remote from the scene of action, wearied by the toils of war, and foreseeing that this would be a tedious siege, requiring patience and vigilance rather than hardy deeds of arms, contented themselves with sending their vassals, while they staid at home, to attend to their domains. Many cities furnished soldiers at their cost, and the king took the field with an army of forty thousand infantry and ten thousand horse. The principal captains who followed the king in this campaign, were Roderigo Ponce de Leon, the marques of Cadiz, the Master of Santiago, the marques of Villena; the counts of Tendilla, Cifuentes, Cabra, and Urena; and Don Alonzo de Aguilar.

Queen Isabella, accompanied by her son the Prince Juan, and by the princesses Juana, Maria, and Cathalina, her daughters, proceeded to Alcala la Real, the mountain fortress and strong-hold of the count de Tendilla. Here she remained, to forward supplies to the army, and to be ready to repair to the camp, whenever her presence might be required.

The army of Ferdinand poured into the vega, by various defiles of the mountains; and on the 23d of April, the royal tent was pitched at a village called Los Ojos de Huescar, about a league and a half from Granada. At the approach of

* Garibay, lib. 18, c. 39.

this formidable force, the harassed inhabitants turned pale and even many of the warriors trembled; for they felt that the last desperate struggle was at hand.

Boabdil el Chico assembled his council in the Alhambra, from the windows of which they could behold the Christian squadrons glistening through clouds of dust, as they poured along the vega. The utmost confusion and consternation reigned in the council. Many of the members, terrified with the horrors impending over their families, advised Boabdil to throw himself upon the generosity of the Christian monarch: even several of the bravest suggested the possibility of obtaining honorable terms.

The Wazir of the city, Abul Casim Abdel Melic, was called upon to report the state of the public means for sustenance and defence. There were sufficient provisions, he said, for a few months' supply, independent of what might exist in the possession of merchants and other rich inhabitants. "But of what avail," said he, "is a supply for a few months, against the sieges of the Castilian monarch, which are interminable?"

He produced, also, the lists of men capable of bearing arms. "The number," said he, "is great; but what can be expected from mere citizen soldiers? They vaunt and menace, in time of safety; none are so arrogant, when the enemy is at a distance—but when the din of war thunders at their gates, they hide themselves in terror."

When Muza heard these words, he rose with generous warmth: "What reason have we," said he, "to despair? The blood of those illustrious Moors, the conquerors of Spain, still flows in our veins. Let us be true to ourselves, and fortune will again be with us. We have a veteran force, both horse and foot, the flower of our chivalry, seasoned in war and scarred in a thousand battles. As to the multitude of our citizens, spoken of so slightly, why should we doubt their valor? There are twenty thousand young men, in the fire of youth, for whom I will engage, that in the defence of their homes they will rival the most valiant veterans. Do we want provisions? Our horses are fleet, and our horsemen daring in the foray. Let them scour and scourge the country of those apostate Moslems who have surrendered to the Christians. Let them make inroads into the lands of our enemies. We shall soon see them returning with cavalgadas to our gates; and, to a soldier, there is no morsel so sweet as that wrested with hard fighting from the foe."

Boabdil el Chico, though he wanted firm and durable courage, was readily excited to sudden emotions of bravery. He caught a glow of resolution from the noble ardor of Muza. "Do what is needful," said he to his commanders; "into your hands I confide the common safety. You are the protectors of the kingdom, and, with the aid of Allah, will revenge the insults of our religion, the deaths of our friends and relations, and the sorrows and sufferings heaped upon our land."*

To every one was now assigned his separate duty. The wazir had charge of the arms, and provisions, and the enrolling of the people. Muza was to command the cavalry, to defend the gates, and to take the lead in all sallies and skirmishes. Naim Reduan, and Muhamed Aben Zayde, were his adjutants, Abdel Kerim Zegri, and the other captains, were to guard the walls; and the alcaides of the Alcazaba, and of the Red Towers, had command of the fortresses.

Nothing now was heard but the din of arms, and the bustle of preparation. The Moorish spirit, quick to catch fire, was immediately in a flame; and the populace, in the excitement of the moment, set at nought the power of the Christians. Muza was in all parts of the city, infusing his own generous zeal into the bosoms of the soldiery. The young cavaliers rallied round him as their model; the veteran warriors regarded him with a soldier's admiration; the vulgar throng followed him with shouts, and the helpless part of the inhabitants, the old men and the women, hailed him with blessings as their protector.

On the first appearance of the Christian army, the principal gates of the city had been closed, and secured with bars and bolts and heavy chains: Muza now ordered them to be thrown open; "To me and my cavaliers," said he, "is intrusted the defence of the gates; our bodies shall be their barriers." He stationed at each gate a strong guard, chosen from his bravest men. His horsemen were always completely armed, and ready to mount at a moment's warning: their steeds stood saddled and caparisoned in the stables, with lance and buckler beside them. On the least approach of the enemy, a squadron of horsemen gathered within the gate, ready to lanch forth like the bolt from the thunder-cloud. Muza made no empty bravado nor haughty threat; he was more terrible in deeds than in words, and executed daring exploits, beyond even the

* Conde.

vaunt of the vainglorious. Such was the present champion of the Moors. Had they possessed many such warriors, or had Muza risen to power at an earlier period of the war, the fate of Granada might have been deferred, and the Moor for a long time have maintained his throne within the walls of the Alhambra.

CHAPTER XLVI.

HOW KING FERDINAND CONDUCTED THE SIEGE CAUTIOUSLY; AND
HOW QUEEN ISABELLA ARRIVED AT THE CAMP.

THOUGH Granada was shorn of its glories, and nearly cut off from all external aid, still its mighty castles and massive bulwarks seemed to set all attacks at defiance. Being the last retreat of Moorish power, it had assembled within its walls the remnants of the armies that had contended, step by step, with the invaders, in their gradual conquest of the land. All that remained of high-born and high-bred chivalry, was here; all that was loyal and patriotic was roused to activity by the common danger; and Granada, that had so long been lulled into inaction by vain hopes of security, now assumed a formidable aspect in the hour of its despair.

Ferdinand saw that any attempt to subdue the city by main force, would be perilous and bloody. Cautious in his policy, and fond of conquests gained by art rather than valor, he resorted to the plan which had been so successful with Baza, and determined to reduce the place by famine. For this purpose, his armies penetrated into the very heart of the Alpuxarras, and ravaged the valleys, and sacked and burnt the towns, upon which the city depended for its supplies. Scouting parties, also, ranged the mountains behind Granada, and captured every casual convoy of provisions. The Moors became more daring, as their situation became more hopeless. Never had Ferdinand experienced such vigorous sallies and assaults. Muza, at the head of his cavalry, harassed the borders of the camp, and even penetrated into the interior, making sudden spoil and ravage, and leaving his course to be traced by the slain and wounded. To protect his camp from these assaults, Ferdinand fortified it with deep trenches and

strong bulwarks. It was of a quadrangular form, divided into streets like a city, the troops being quartered in tents, and in booths constructed of bushes and branches of trees. When it was completed, queen Isabella came in state, with all her court, and the prince and princesses, to be present at the siege. This was intended, as on former occasions, to reduce the besieged to despair, by showing the determination of the sovereigns to reside in the camp until the city should surrender. Immediately after her arrival, the queen rode forth to survey the camp and its environs: wherever she went, she was attended by a splendid retinue; and all the commanders vied with each other, in the pomp and ceremony with which they received her. Nothing was heard, from morning until night, but shouts and acclamations, and bursts of martial music; so that it appeared to the Moors as if a continual festival and triumph reigned in the Christian camp.

The arrival of the queen, however, and the menaced obstinacy of the siege, had no effect in damping the fire of the Moorish chivalry. Muza inspired the youthful warriors with the most devoted heroism: "We have nothing left to fight for," said he, "but the ground we stand on; when this is lost, we cease to have a country and a name."

Finding the Christian king forbore to make an attack, Muza incited his cavaliers to challenge the youthful chivalry of the Christian army to single combat, or partial skirmishes. Scarce a day passed without gallant conflicts of the kind, in sight of the city and the camp. The combatants rivalled each other in the splendor of their armor and array, as well as in the prowess of their deeds. Their contests were more like the stately ceremonials of tilts and tournaments, than the rude conflicts of the field. Ferdinand soon perceived that they animated the fiery Moors with fresh zeal and courage, while they cost the lives of many of his bravest cavaliers: he again, therefore, forbade the acceptance of any individual challenges, and ordered that all partial encounters should be avoided. The cool and stern policy of the Catholic sovereign bore hard upon the generous spirits of either army, but roused the indignation of the Moors, when they found that they were to be subdued in this inglorious manner: "Of what avail," said they, "are chivalry and heroic valor? the crafty monarch of the Christians has no magnanimity in warfare; he seeks to subdue us through the weakness of our bodies, but shuns to encounter the courage of our souls."

CHAPTER XLVII.

OF THE INSOLENT DEFIANCE OF YARFE THE MOOR, AND THE
DARING EXPLOIT OF HERNAMDO PEREZ DEL PULGAR.

WHEN the Moorish knights beheld that all courteous challenges were unavailing, they sought various means to provoke the Christian warriors to the field. Sometimes a body of them, fleetly mounted, would gallop up to the skirts of the camp, and try who should hurl his lance farthest within the barriers, having his name inscribed upon it, or a label affixed to it, containing some taunting defiance. These bravadoes caused great irritation, but still the Spanish warriors were restrained by the prohibition of the king.

Among the Moorish cavaliers was one named Yarfe, renowned for his great strength and daring spirit; but whose courage partook of fierce audacity, rather than chivalric heroism. In one of these sallies, when they were skirting the Christian camp, this arrogant Moor outstripped his companions, overleaped the barriers, and, galloping close to the royal quarters, launched his lance so far within, that it remained quivering in the earth close by the pavilions of the sovereigns. The royal guards rushed forth in pursuit, but the Moorish horsemen were already beyond the camp, and scouring in a cloud of dust for the city. Upon wresting the lance from the earth, a label was found upon it, importing that it was intended for the queen.

Nothing could equal the indignation of the Christian warriors, at the insolence of the bravado, and the discourteous insult offered to the queen. Hernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed "he of the exploits," was present, and resolved not to be outbraved by this daring infidel: "Who will stand by me," said he, "in an enterprise of desperate peril?" The Christian cavaliers well knew the harebrained valor of Hernando del Pulgar, yet not one hesitated to step forward. He chose fifteen companions, all men of powerful arm and dauntless heart. In the dead of the night, he led them forth from the camp, and approached the city cautiously, until he arrived at a postern-gate, which opened upon the Darro, and was guarded by foot-soldiers. The guards, little thinking of such

an unwonted and partial attack, were for the most part asleep. The gate was forced, and a confused and chance-medley skirmish ensued: Hernando del Pulgar stopped not to take part in the affray: putting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously through the streets, striking fire out of the stones at every bound. Arrived at the principal mosque, he sprang from his horse, and, kneeling at the portal, took possession of the edifice as a Christian chapel, dedicating it to the blessed virgin. In testimonial of the ceremony, he took a tablet which he had brought with him, on which was inscribed in large characters, "AVE MARIA," and nailed it to the door of the mosque with his dagger. This done, he remounted his steed, and galloped back to the gate. The alarm had been given—the city was in an uproar—soldiers were gathering from every direction. They were astonished at seeing a Christian warrior galloping from the interior of the city. Hernando del Pulgar overturned some, cut down others, rejoined his companions, who still maintained possession of the gate by dint of hard fighting, and all made good their retreat to the camp. The Moors were at a loss to imagine the meaning of this wild and apparently fruitless assault; but great was their exasperation, on the following day, when the trophy of hardihood and prowess, the "AVE MARIA," was discovered thus elevated in bravado in the very centre of the city. The mosque thus boldly sanctified by Hernando del Pulgar was actually consecrated into a cathedral, after the capture of Granada.*

CHAPTER^d XLVIII.

HOW QUEEN ISABELLA TOOK A VIEW OF THE CITY OF GRANADA
—AND HOW HER CURIOSITY COST THE LIVES OF MANY CHRIS-
TIAN AND MOORS.

THE royal encampment lay at such a distance from Granada, that the general aspect of the city only could be seen, as

* In commemoration of this daring feat, the emperor Charles V., in after years conferred on Pulgar and his descendants the right of sepulture in that church, and the privilege of sitting in the choir during high mass. This Hernando Perez del Pulgar was a man of letters, as well as arms, and inscribed to Charles V. a summary of the achievements of Gonsalvo of Cordova, surnamed the great captain, who had been one of his comrades in arms. He is often confounded with Hernando del Pulgar, historian and secretary to queen Isabella.—See note to Pulgar's Chron. of the Catholic Sovereigns, part 3, c. iii. edit. Valencia, 1780.

it rose gracefully from the vega, covering the sides of the hills with palaces and towers. Queen Isabella had expressed an earnest desire to behold, nearer at hand, a city whose beauty was so renowned throughout the world; and the marques of Cadiz, with the accustomed courtesy, prepared a great military escort and guard, to protect the queen and the ladies of the court, while they enjoyed this perilous gratification.

It was on the morning after the events recorded in the preceding chapter, that a magnificent and powerful train issued forth from the Christian camp. The advanced guard was composed of legions of cavalry, heavily armed, that looked like moving masses of polished steel. Then came the king and queen, with the prince and princess, and the ladies of the court, surrounded by the royal body-guard, sumptuously arrayed, composed of the sons of the most illustrious houses of Spain; after these was the rear-guard, composed of a powerful force of horse and foot; for the flower of the army sallied forth that day. The Moors gazed with fearful admiration at this glorious pageant, wherein the pomp of the court was mingled with the terrors of the camp. It moved along in a radiant line, across the vega, to the melodious thunders of martial music; while banner and plume, and silken scarf, and rich brocade, gave a gay and gorgeous relief to the grim visage of iron war, that lurked beneath.

The army moved towards the hamlet of Zubia, built on the skirts of the mountain to the left of Granada, and commanding a view of the Alhambra, and the most beautiful quarter of the city. As they approached the hamlet, the marques of Villena, the count Ureña, and Don Alonzo de Aguilar, filed off with their battalions, and were soon seen glittering along the side of the mountain above the village. In the mean time, the marques of Cadiz, the count de Tendilla, the count de Cabra, and Don Alonzo Fernandez, Senior of Alcandrete and Montemayor, drew up their forces in battle array on the plain below the hamlet, presenting a living barrier of loyal chivalry between the sovereigns and the city.

Thus securely guarded, the royal party alighted, and, entering one of the houses of the hamlet, which had been prepared for their reception, enjoyed a full view of the city from its terraced roof. The ladies of the court, gazed with delight at the red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst shady groves, anticipating the time when the Catholic sovereigns should be enthroned within its walls, and its courts shine with the splen-

dor of Spanish chivalry. "The reverend prelates and holy friars, who always surrounded the queen, looked with serene satisfaction," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "at this modern Babylon, enjoying the triumph that awaited them, when those mosques and minarets should be converted into churches, and goodly priests and bishops should succeed to the infidel alfaquis."

When the Moors beheld the Christians thus drawn forth in full array in the plain, they supposed it was to offer them battle; and they hesitated not to accept it. In a little while, the queen beheld a body of Moorish cavalry pouring into the vega, the riders managing their fleet and fiery steeds with admirable address. They were richly armed, and clothed in the most brilliant colors, and the caparisons of their steeds flamed with gold and embroidery. This was the favorite squadron of Muza, composed of the flower of the youthful cavaliers of Granada. Others succeeded, some heavily armed, some *à la ginete* with lance and buckler; and lastly came the legions of foot-soldiers, with arquebuss and cross-bow, and spear and scimitar.

When the queen saw this army issuing from the city, she sent to the marques of Cadiz, and forbade any attack upon the enemy, or the acceptance of any challenge to a skirmish; for she was loth that her curiosity should cost the life of a single human being.

The marques promised to obey, though sorely against his will; and it grieved the spirit of the Spanish cavaliers, to be obliged to remain with sheathed swords while bearded by the foe. The Moors could not comprehend the meaning of this inaction of the Christians, after having apparently invited a battle. They sallied several times from their ranks, and approached near enough to discharge their arrows; but the Christians were immovable. Many of the Moorish horsemen galloped close to the Christian ranks, brandishing their lances and scimitars, and defying various cavaliers to single combat; but king Ferdinand had rigorously prohibited all duels of the kind, and they dared not transgress his orders under his very eye.

While this grim and reluctant tranquillity prevailed along the Christian line, there rose a mingled shout and sound of laughter near the gate of the city. A Moorish horseman, armed at all points, issued forth, followed by a rabble, who drew back as he approached the scene of danger. The Moor

was more robust and brawny than was common with his countrymen. His visor was closed; he bore a huge buckler and a ponderous lance; his scimitar was of a Damascus blade, and his richly ornamented dagger was wrought by an artificer of Fez. He was known by his device to be Yarfé, the most insolent, yet valiant, of the Moslem warriors—the same who had hurled into the royal camp his lance, inscribed to the queen. As he rode slowly along in front of the army, his very steed, prancing with fiery eye and distended nostril, seemed to breathe defiance to the Christians.

But what were the feelings of the Spanish cavaliers, when they beheld, tied to the tail of his steed, and dragged in the dust, the very inscription, "AVE MARIA," which Hernando Perez del Pulgar had affixed to the door of the mosque! A burst of horror and indignation broke forth from the army. Hernando del Pulgar was not at hand to maintain his previous achievement; but one of his young companions in arms, Garcilasso de la Vega by name, putting spurs to his horse, galloped to the hamlet of Zubia, threw himself on his knees before the king, and besought permission to accept the defiance of this insolent infidel, and to revenge the insult offered to our blessed Lady. The request was too pious to be refused: Garcilasso remounted his steed; he closed his helmet, graced by four sable plumes, grasped his buckler of Flemish workmanship, and his lance of matchless temper, and defied the haughty Moor in the midst of his career. A combat took place in view of the two armies and of the Castilian court. The Moor was powerful in wielding his weapons, and dexterous in managing his steed. He was of larger frame than Garcilasso, and more completely armed; and the Christians trembled for their champion. The shock of their encounter was dreadful; their lances were shivered, and sent up splinters in the air. Garcilasso was thrown back in the saddle—his horse made a wide career, before he could recover, gather up the reins, and return to the conflict. They now encountered each other with swords. The Moor circled round his opponent, as hawk circles whereabout to make a swoop; his Arabian steed obeyed his rider, with matchless quickness; at every attack of the infidel it seemed as if the Christian knight must sink beneath his flashing scimitar. But if Garcilasso were inferior to him in power, he was superior in agility: many of his blows he parried; others he received upon his Flemish shield, which was proof against the Damascus blade. The blood

streamed from numerous wounds received by either warrior. The Moor, seeing his antagonist exhausted, availed himself of his superior force, and, grappling, endeavored to wrest him from his saddle. They both fell to earth; the Moor placed his knee upon the breast of his victim, and, brandishing his dagger, aimed a blow at his throat. A cry of despair was uttered by the Christian warriors, when suddenly they beheld the Moor rolling lifeless in the dust. Garcilasso had shortened his sword, and, as his adversary raised his arm to strike, had pierced him to the heart. "It was a singular and miraculous victory," says Fray Antonio Agapida; "but the Christian knight was armed by the sacred nature of his cause, and the holy virgin gave him strength, like another David, to slay this gigantic champion of the Gentiles."

The laws of chivalry were observed throughout the combat—no one interfered on either side. Garcilasso now despoiled his adversary; then, rescuing the holy inscription of "Ave MARIA" from its degrading situation, he elevated it on the point of his sword, and bore it off as a signal of triumph, amidst the rapturous shouts of the Christian army.

The sun had now reached the meridian; and the hot blood of the Moors was inflamed by its rays, and by the sight of the defeat of their champion. Muza ordered two pieces of ordnance to open a fire upon the Christians. A confusion was produced in one part of their ranks: Muza called to the chiefs of the army, "Let us waste no more time in empty challenges let us charge upon the enemy: he who assaults has always an advantage in the combat." So saying, he rushed forward, followed by a large body of horse and foot, and charged so furiously upon the advance guard of the Christians, that he drove it in upon the battalion of the marques of Cadiz.

The gallant marques now considered himself absolved from all further obedience to the queen's commands. He gave the signal to attack. "Santiago!" was shouted along the line; and he pressed forward to the encounter, with his battalion of twelve hundred lances. The other cavaliers followed his example, and the battle instantly became general.

When the king and queen beheld the armies thus rushing to the combat, they threw themselves on their knees, and implored the holy virgin to protect her faithful warriors. The prince and princess, the ladies of the court, and the prelates and friars who were present, did the same; and the effect of the prayers of these illustrious and saintly persons, was im-

mediately apparent. The fierceness with which the Moors had rushed to the attack was suddenly cooled; they were bold and adroit for a skirmish, but unequal to the veteran Spaniards in the open field. A panic seized upon the foot-soldiers—they turned, and took to flight. Muza and his cavaliers in vain endeavored to rally them. Some took refuge in the mountains; but the greater part fled to the city, in such confusion that they overturned and trampled upon each other. The Christians pursued them to the very gates. Upwards of two thousand were either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners; and the two pieces of ordnance were brought off, as trophies of the victory. Not a Christian lance but was bathed that day in the blood of an infidel.*

Such was the brief but bloody action, which was known among the Christian warriors by the name of “the queen’s skirmish;” for when the marques of Cadiz waited upon her majesty to apologize for breaking her commands, he attributed the victory entirely to her presence. The queen, however, insisted that it was all owing to her troops being led on by so valiant a commander. Her majesty had not yet recovered from her agitation at beholding so terrible a scene of bloodshed; though certain veterans present pronounced it as gay and gentle a skirmish as they had ever witnessed.

To commemorate this victory, the queen afterwards erected a monastery in this village of Zubia, dedicated to St. Francisco, which still exists; and in its garden is a laurel, planted by the hands of her majesty.†

* Cura de los Palacios.

† The house from whence the king and queen contemplated the battle, is likewise to be seen at the present day. It is in the first street to the right, on entering the village from the vega; and the royal arms are painted on the ceilings. It is inhabited by a worthy farmer, Francisco Garcia, who, in showing the house, refuses all compensation, with true Spanish pride; offering, on the contrary, the hospitalities of his mansion to the stranger. His children are versed in the old Spanish ballads, about the exploits of Hernando Perez del Pulgar and Garcilasso de la Vega.

CHAPTER XLIX.

CONFLAGRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CAMP.

THE ravages of war had as yet spared a little portion of the vega of Granada. A green belt of gardens and orchards still flourished round the city, extending along the banks of the Xenel and the Darro. They had been the solace and delight of the inhabitants in their happier days, and contributed to their sustenance in this time of scarcity. Ferdinand determined to make a final and exterminating ravage to the very walls of the city, so that there should not remain a single green thing for the sustenance of man or beast. The evening of a hot July day shone splendidly upon the Christian camp, which was in a bustle of preparation for the next day's service—for desperate resistance was expected from the Moors. The camp made a glorious appearance in the setting sun. The various tents of the royal family and the attendant nobles, were adorned with rich hangings, and sumptuous devices, and costly furniture; forming, as it were, a little city of silk and brocade, where the pinnacles of pavilions of various gay colors, surmounted with waving standards and fluttering pennons, might vie with the domes and minarets of the capital they were besieging.

In the midst of this little gaudy metropolis, the lofty tent of the queen domineered over the rest like a stately palace. The marques of Cadiz had courteously surrendered his own tent to the queen: it was the most complete and sumptuous in Christendom, and had been carried about with him throughout the war. In the centre rose a stately alfaneque or pavilion in oriental taste, the rich hangings being supported by columns of lances and ornamented with martial devices. This central pavilion, or silken tower, was surrounded by other compartments, some of painted linen lined with silk, and all separated from each other by curtains. It was one of those camp palaces which are raised and demolished in an instant, like the city of canvas that surrounds them.

As the evening advanced, the bustle in the camp subsided. Every one sought repose, preparatory to the next day's trial. The king retired early, that he might be up with the crowing

of the cock, to head the destroying army in person. All stir of military preparation was hushed in the royal quarters; the very sound of minstrelsy was mute, and not the tinkling of a guitar was to be heard from the tents of the fair ladies of the court.

The queen had retired to the innermost part of her pavilion, where she was performing her orisons before a private altar: perhaps the peril to which the king might be exposed in the next day's foray, inspired her with more than usual devotion. While thus at her prayers, she was suddenly aroused by a glare of light, and wreaths of suffocating smoke. In an instant, the whole tent was in a blaze: there was a high gusty wind, which whirled the light flames from tent to tent, and wrapped the whole in one conflagration.

Isabella had barely time to save herself by instant flight. Her first thought, on being extricated from her tent, was for the safety of the king. She rushed to his tent, but the vigilant Ferdinand was already at the entrance of it. Starting from bed at the first alarm, and fancying it an assault of the enemy, he had seized his sword and buckler, and sallied forth undressed, with his cuirass upon his arm.

The late gorgeous camp was now a scene of wild confusion. The flames kept spreading from one pavilion to another, glaring upon the rich armor, and golden and silver vessels, which seemed melting in the fervent heat. Many of the soldiers had erected booths and bowers of brances, which, being dry, crackled and blazed, and added to the rapid conflagration. The ladies of the court fled, shrieking and half-dressed, from their tents. There was an alarm of drum and trumpet, and a distracted hurry about the camp of men half armed. The prince Juan had been snatched out of bed by an attendant, and conveyed to the quarters of the count de Cabra, which were at the entrance of the camp. The loyal count immediately summoned his people, and those of his cousin Don Alonzo de Montemagor, and formed a guard round the tent in which the prince was sheltered.

The idea that this was a stratagem of the Moors, soon subsided; but it was feared they might take advantage of it to assault the camp. The marques of Cadiz, therefore, sallied forth with three thousand horse to check any advance from the city. As they passed along, the whole camp was a scene of hurry and consternation—some hastening to their posts, at the call of drum and trumpet; some attempting to save rich effects and

glittering armor from the tents, others dragging along terrified and restive horses.

When they emerged from the camp, they found the whole firmament illuminated. The flames whirled up in long light spires, and the air was filled with sparks and cinders. A bright glare was thrown upon the city, revealing every battlement and tower. Turbaned heads were seen gazing from every roof, and armor gleamed along the walls; yet not a single warrior sallied from the gates: the Moors suspected some stratagem on the part of the Christians, and kept quietly within their walls. By degrees, the flames expired; the city faded from sight; all again became dark and quiet, and the marques of Cadiz returned with his cavalry to the camp.

CHAPTER L.

THE LAST RAVAGE BEFORE GRANADA.

WHEN the day dawned on the Christian camp, nothing remained of that beautiful assemblage of stately pavilions, but heaps of smouldering rubbish, with helms and corselets and other furniture of war, and masses of melted gold and silver glittering among the ashes. The wardrobe of the queen was entirely destroyed, and there was an immense loss in plate, jewels, costly stuffs, and sumptuous armor of the luxurious nobles. The fire at first had been attributed to treachery, but on investigation it proved to be entirely accidental. The queen, on retiring to her prayers, had ordered her lady in attendance to remove a light burning near her couch, lest it should prevent her sleeping. Through heedlessness, the taper was placed in another part of the tent, near the hangings, which being blown against it by a gust of wind, immediately took fire.

The wary Ferdinand knew the sanguine temperament of the Moors, and hastened to prevent their deriving confidence from the night's disaster. At break of day, the drums and trumpets sounded to arms, and the Christian army issued from among the smoking ruins of their camp, in shining squadrons, with flaunting banners and bursts of martial melody, as though the preceding night had been a time of high festivity, instead of terror.

The Moors had beheld the conflagration with wonder and perplexity. When the day broke, and they looked towards the Christian camp, they saw nothing but a dark smoking mass. Their scouts came in, with the joyful intelligence that the whole camp was a scene of ruin. Scarce had the tidings spread throughout the city, when they beheld the Christian army advancing towards their walls. They considered it a feint, to cover their desperate situation and prepare for a retreat. Boabdil el Chico had one of his impulses of valor—he determined to take the field in person, and to follow up this signal blow which Allah had inflicted on the enemy.

The Christian army approached close to the city, and were laying waste the gardens and orchards, when Boabdil sallied forth, surrounded by all that was left of the flower and chivalry of Granada. There is one place where even the coward becomes brave—that sacred spot called home. What then must have been the valor of the Moors, a people always of fiery spirit, when the war was thus brought to their thresholds! They fought among the scenes of their loves and pleasures; the scenes of their infancy, and the haunts of their domestic life. They fought under the eyes of their wives and children, their old men and their maidens, of all that was helpless and all that was dear to them; for all Granada, crowded on tower and battlement, watched with trembling heart the fate of this eventful day.

There was not so much one battle, as a variety of battles; every garden and orchard became a scene of deadly contest; every inch of ground was disputed, with an agony of grief and valor, by the Moors; every inch of ground that the Christians advanced, they valiantly maintained; but never did they advance with severer fighting, or greater loss of blood.

The cavalry of Muza was in every part of the field; wherever it came, it gave fresh ardor to the fight. The Moorish soldier, fainting with heat, fatigue, and wounds, was roused to new life at the approach of Muza; and even he who lay gasping in the agonies of death, turned his face towards him, and faintly uttered cheers and blessings as he passed.

The Christians had by this time gained possession of various towers near the city, from whence they had been annoyed by cross-bows and arquebusses. The Moors, scattered in various actions, were severely pressed. Boabdil, at the head of the cavaliers of his guard, displayed the utmost valor, mingling in the fight in various parts of the field, and endeavoring to in-

spirit the foot-soldiers in the combat. But the Moorish infantry was never to be depended upon. In the heat of the action, a panic seized upon them; they fled, leaving their sovereign exposed with his handful of cavaliers to an overwhelming force. Boabdil was on the point of falling into the hands of the Christians, when, wheeling round, with his followers, they threw the reins on the necks of their fleet steeds, and took refuge by dint of hoof within the walls of the city.*

Muza endeavored to retrieve the fortune of the field. He threw himself before the retreating infantry, calling upon them to turn and fight for their homes, their families, for every thing that was sacred and dear to them. It was all in vain:—they were totally broken and dismayed, and fled tumultuously for the gates. Muza would fain have kept the field with his cavalry; but this devoted band, having stood the brunt of war throughout this desperate campaign, was fearfully reduced in numbers, and many of the survivors were crippled and enfeebled by their wounds. Slowly and reluctantly Muza retreated to the city, his bosom swelling with indignation and despair. When he entered the gates, he ordered them to be closed, and secured with bolts and bars; for he refused to place any further confidence in the archers and arquebusiers who were stationed to defend them, and he vowed never more to sally forth with foot-soldiers to the field.

In the mean time the artillery thundered from the walls, and checked all further advances of the Christians. King Ferdinand, therefore, called off his troops, and returned in triumph to the ruins of his camp, leaving the beautiful city of Granada wrapped in the smoke of her fields and gardens, and surrounded by the bodies of her slaughtered children.

Such was the last sally made by the Moors, in defence of their favorite city. The French ambassador, who witnessed it, was filled with wonder, at the prowess, the dexterity, and daring of the Moslems.

In truth, this whole war was an instance, memorable in history, of the most persevering resolution. For nearly ten years had the war endured—an almost uninterrupted series of disasters to the Moorish arms. Their towns had been taken, one after another, and their brethren slain or led into captivity. Yet they disputed every city and town, and fortress and castle, nay every rock itself, as if they had been inspirited by victor-

* Zurita. lib. 20. c. 88.

ies. Wherever they could plant foot to fight, or find wall or cliff from whence to lanch an arrow, they disputed their beloved country; and now, when their capital was cut off from all relief, and had a whole nation thundering at his gates, they still maintained defence, as if they hoped some miracle to interpose in their behalf. Their obstinate resistance (says an ancient chronicler) shows the grief with which the Moors yielded up the vega, which was to them a paradise and heaven. Exerting all the strength of their arms, they embraced, as it were, that most beloved soil, from which neither wounds, nor defeat, nor death itself, could part them. They stood firm, battling for it with the united force of love and grief, never drawing back the foot while they had hands to fight, or fortune to befriend them.*

CHAPTER LI.

BUILDING OF THE CITY OF SANTA FÉ—DESPAIR OF THE MOORS.

THE Moors now shut themselves up gloomily within their walls; there were no longer any daring sallies from their gates; and even the martial clangor of the drum and trumpet, which had continually resounded within that warrior city, was now seldom heard from its battlements. For a time, they flattered themselves with hopes that the late conflagration of the camp would discourage the besiegers; that, as in former years, their invasion would end with the summer, and that they would again withdraw before the autumnal rains.

The measures of Ferdinand and Isabella soon crushed these hopes. They gave orders to build a regular city upon the site of their camp, to convince the Moors that the siege was to endure until the surrender of Granada. Nine of the principal cities of Spain were charged with the stupendous undertaking; and they emulated each other, with a zeal worthy of the cause. "It verily seems," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "as though some miracle operated to aid this pious work, so rapidly did arise a formidable city, with solid edifices, and powerful walls, and mighty towers, where lately had been seen nothing but

* Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, R. 30, c. 3.

tents and light pavilions. The city was traversed by two principal streets in form of a cross, terminating in four gates facing the four winds; and in the centre was a vast square, where the whole army might be assembled. To this city it was proposed to give the name of Isabella, so dear to the army and the nation; "but that pious princess," adds Antonio Agapida, "calling to mind the holy cause in which it was erected, gave it the name of Santa Fé, (or the City of the Holy Faith;) and it remains to this day, a monument of the piety and glory of the Catholic sovereigns."

Hither the merchants soon resorted, from all points. Long trains of mules were seen every day entering and departing from its gates; the streets were crowded with magazines, filled with all kinds of costly and luxurious merchandise; a scene of bustling commerce and prosperity took place, while unhappy Granada remained shut up and desolate.

In the mean time, the besieged city began to suffer the distress of famine. Its supplies were all cut off; a cavalgada of flocks and herds, and mules laden with money, coming to the relief of the city from the mountains of the Alpuxarras, was taken by the marques of Cadiz, and led in triumph to the camp, in sight of the suffering Moors. Autumn arrived; but the harvests had been swept from the face of the country; a rigorous winter was approaching, and the city was almost destitute of provisions. The people sank into deep despondency. They called to mind all that had been predicted by astrologers at the birth of their ill-starred sovereign, and all that had been foretold of the fate of Granada at the time of the capture of Zahara.

Boabdil was alarmed by the gathering dangers from without, and by the clamors of his starving people. He summoned a council, composed of the principal officers of the army, the alcaides of the fortresses, the *xequis* or sages of the city, and the *alfaquis* or doctors of the faith. They assembled in the great hall of audience of the Alhambra, and despair was painted in their countenances. Boabdil demanded of them, what was to be done in their present extremity; and their answer was, "Surrender." The venerable Abul Cazin Abdel Melic, governor of the city, represented its unhappy state: "Our granaries are nearly exhausted, and no further supplies are to be expected. The provender for the war-horses is required as sustenance for the soldiery; the very horses themselves are killed for food; of seven thousand steeds which once

could be sent into the field, three hundred only remain. Our city contains two hundred thousand inhabitants, old and young, with each a mouth that calls piteously for bread."

The xequis and principal citizens declared that the people could no longer sustain the labors and sufferings of a defence: "And of what avail is our defence," said they, "when the enemy is determined to persist in the siege?—what alternative remains, but to surrender or to die?"

The heart of Boabdil was touched by this appeal, and he maintained a gloomy silence. He had cherished some faint hope of relief from the soldan of Egypt or the Barbary powers: but it was now at an end; even if such assistance were to be sent, he had no longer a sea-port where it might debark. The counsellors saw that the resolution of the king was shaken, and they united their voices in urging him to capitulate.

The valiant Muza alone arose in opposition: "It is yet too early," said he, "to talk of a surrender. Our means are not exhausted; we have yet one source of strength remaining, terrible in its effects, and which often has achieved the most signal victories—it is our despair. Let us rouse the mass of the people—let us put weapons in their hands—let us fight the enemy to the very utmost, until we rush upon the points of their lances. I am ready to lead the way into the thickest of their squadrons; and much rather would I be numbered among those who fell in the defence of Granada, than of those who survived to capitulate for her surrender!"

The words of Muza were without effect, for they were addressed to broken-spirited and heartless men, or men, perhaps, to whom sad experience had taught discretion. They were arrived at that state of public depression, when heroes and heroism are no longer regarded, and when old men and their counsels rise into importance. Boabdil el Chico yielded to the general voice; it was determined to capitulate with the Christian sovereigns; and the venerable Abul Cazim Abdul Melic was sent forth to the camp, empowered to treat for terms.

CHAPTER LII.

CAPITULATION OF GRANADA.

THE old governor, Abul Cazim Abdel Melic, was received with great distinction by Ferdinand and Isabella, who appointed Gonsalvo of Cordova and Fernando de Zafra, secretary to the king, to confer with him. All Granada awaited in trembling anxiety, the result of his negotiations. After repeated conferences, he at length returned with the ultimate terms of the Catholic sovereigns. They agreed to suspend all attack for seventy days, at the end of which time, if no succor should arrive to the Moorish king, the city of Granada was to be surrendered.

All Christian captives should be liberated, without ransom.

Boabdil and his principal cavaliers should take an oath of fealty to the Castilian crown, and certain valuable territories in the Alpuxarra mountains should be assigned to the Moorish monarch for his maintenance.

The Moors of Granada should become subjects of the Spanish sovereigns, retaining their possessions, their arms and horses, and yielding up nothing but their artillery. They should be protected in the exercise of their religion, and governed by their own laws, administered by cadis of their own faith, under governors appointed by the sovereigns. They should be exempted from tribute for three years, after which term they should pay the same that they had been accustomed to render to their native monarchs.

Those who chose to depart for Africa within three years, should be provided with a passage for themselves and their effects, free of charge, from whatever port they should prefer.

For the fulfilment of these articles, four hundred hostages from the principal families were required, previous to the surrender, to be subsequently restored. The son of the king of Granada, and all other hostages in possession of the Castilian sovereigns, were to be restored at the same time.

Such were the conditions that the wazir Abul Cazim laid before the council of Granada, as the best that could be obtained from the besieging foe.

When the members of the council found that the awful mo-

ment had arrived when they were to sign and seal the perdition of their empire, and blot themselves out as a nation, all firmness deserted them, and many gave way to tears. Muza alone retained an unaltered mien: "Leave, seniors," cried he, "this idle lamentation to helpless women and children: we are men—we have hearts, not to shed tender tears, but drops of blood. I see the spirit of the people so cast down, that it is impossible to save the kingdom. Yet there still remains an alternative for noble minds—a glorious death! Let us die defending our liberty, and avenging the woes of Granada. Our mother earth will receive her children into her bosom, safe from the chains and oppressions of the conqueror; or, should any fail a sepulchre to hide his remains, he will not want a sky to cover him. Allah forbid, it should be said the nobles of Granada feared to die in her defence!"

Muza ceased to speak, and a dead silence reigned in the assembly. Boabdil el Chico looked anxiously round, and scanned every face; but he read in them all the anxiety of careworn men, in whose hearts enthusiasm was dead, and who had grown callous to every chivalrous appeal. "Allah Acbar! God is great!" exclaimed he; "there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet! It is in vain to struggle against the will of Heaven. Too surely was it written in the book of fate, that I should be unfortunate, and the kingdom expire under my rule."

"Allah Acbar! God is great!" echoed the viziers and alfaquis; "the will of God be done!" So they all accorded with the king, that these evils were preordained; that it was hopeless to contend with them; and that the terms offered by the Castilian monarchs were as favorable as could be expected.

When Muza saw that they were about to sign the treaty of surrender, he rose in violent indignation: "Do not deceive yourselves," cried he, "nor think the Christians will be faithful to their promises, or their king as magnanimous in conquest as he has been victorious in war. Death is the least we have to fear. It is the plundering and sacking of our city, the profanation of our mosques, the ruin of our homes, the violation of our wives and daughters—cruel oppression, bigoted intolerance, whips and chains, the dungeon, the fagot, and the stake—such are the miseries and indignities we shall see and suffer; at least, those groveling souls will see them, who now shrink from an honorable death. For my part, by Allah, I will never witness them!"

With these words he left the council-chamber, and strode gloomily through the Court of Lions and the outer halls of the Alhambra, without deigning to speak to the obsequious courtiers who attended in them. He repaired to his dwelling, armed himself at all points, mounted his favorite war-horse, and, and issuing forth from the city by the gate of Elvira, was never seen or heard of more.*

Such is the account given by Arabian historians, of the exit of Muza ben Abel Gazan; but the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida endeavors to clear up the mystery of his fate. That very evening, a small party of Andalusian cavaliers, somewhat more than half a score of lances, were riding along the banks of the Xenel, where it winds through the vega. They beheld in the twilight a Moorish warrior approaching, closely locked up from head to foot in proof. His visor was closed, his lance in rest, his powerful charger barbed like himself in steel. The Christians were lightly armed, with corselet, helm, and target; for, during the truce, they apprehended no attack. Seeing, however, the unknown warrior approach in this hostile guise, they challenged him to stand and declare himself.

The Moslem answered not, but, charging into the midst of them, transfixing one knight with his lance, and bore him out of his saddle to the earth. Wheeling round, he attacked the rest with his scimitar. His blows were furious and deadly; he seemed regardless what wounds he received, so he could but slay. He was evidently fighting, not for glory, but revenge—eager to inflict death, but careless of surviving to enjoy victory. Near one-half of the fell cavaliers beneath his sword, before he received a dangerous wound, so completely was he cased in armor of proof. At length he was desperately wounded, and his steed, being pierced by a lance, sank to the ground. The Christians, admiring the valor of the Moor, would have spared his life: but he continued to fight upon his knees, brandishing a keen dagger of *l'ez*. Finding at length he could no longer battle, and determined not to be taken prisoner, he threw himself, with an expiring exertion, into the Xenel, and his armor sank him to the bottom of the stream.

This unknown warrior the venerable Agapida pronounces to have been Muza ben Abel Gazan, and says his horse was recognised by certain converted Moors of the Christian camp: the fact, however, has always remained in doubt.

* Conde, part 4.

CHAPTER LIII.

COMMOTIONS IN GRANADA.

THE capitulation for the surrender of Granada was signed on the 25th of November, 1481, and produced a sudden cessation of those hostilities which had raged for so many years. Christian and Moor might now be seen mingling courteously on the banks of the Xenel and the Darro, where to have met a few days previous would have produced a scene of sanguinary contest. Still, as the Moors might be suddenly aroused to defence, if, within the allotted term of seventy days, succors should arrive from abroad; and as they were at all times a rash, inflammable people, the wary Ferdinand maintained a vigilant watch upon the city, and permitted no supplies of any kind to enter. His garrisons in the sea-ports, and his cruisers in the Straits of Gibraltar, were ordered likewise to guard against any relief from the grand soldan of Egypt, or the princes of Barbary. There was no need of such precautions. Those powers were either too much engrossed by their own wars, or too much daunted by the success of the Spanish arms, to interfere in a desperate cause; and the unfortunate Moors of Granada were abandoned to their fate.

The month of December had nearly passed away: the famine became extreme, and there was no hope of any favorable even twithin the terms pecified in the capitulation. Boabdil saw, that to hold out to the end of the allotted time would but be to protract the miseries of his people. With the consent of his council, he determined to surrender the city on the sixth of January. On the 30th of December, he sent his grand vizier Yusef Aben Comixa, with the four hundred hostages, to king Ferdinand, to make known his intention; bearing him, at the same time, a present of a magnificent scimitar, and two Arabian steeds superbly caparisoned.

The unfortunate Boabdil was doomed to meet with trouble, to the end of his career. The very next day, the santon or dervise Hamet Aben Zarrax, the same who had uttered prophecies and excited commotions on former occasions, suddenly made his appearance. Whence he came, no one knew; it was rumored that he had been in the mountains of the

Alpuxarras, and on the coast of Barbary, endeavoring to rouse the Moslems to the relief of Granada. He was reduced to a skeleton; his eyes glowed like coals in their sockets, and his speech was little better than frantic raving. He harangued the populace, in the streets and squares; inveighed against the capitulation, denounced the king and nobles as Moslems only in name, and called upon the people to sally forth against the unbelievers, for that Allah had decreed them a signal victory.

Upwards of twenty thousand of the populace seized their arms, and paraded the streets with shouts and outcries. The shops and houses were shut up; the king himself did not dare to venture forth, but remained a kind of prisoner in the Alhambra.

The turbulent multitude continued roaming and shouting and howling about the city, during the day and a part of the night. Hunger, and a wintry tempest, tamed their frenzy; and when morning came, the enthusiast who had led them on had disappeared. Whether he had been disposed of by the emissaries of the king, or by the leading men of the city, is not known: his disappearance remains a mystery.*

The Moorish king now issued from the Alhambra, attended by his principal nobles, and harangued the populace. He set forth the necessity of complying with the capitulation, from the famine that reigned in the city, the futility of defence, and from the hostages having already been delivered into the hands of the besiegers.

In the dejection of his spirits, the unfortunate Boabdil attributed to himself the miseries of the country. "It was my crime in ascending the throne in rebellion against my father," said he, mournfully, "which has brought these woes upon the kingdom; but Allah has grievously visited my sins upon my head. For your sake, my people, I have now made this treaty, to protect you from the sword, your little ones from famine, your wives and daughters from the outrages of war; and to secure you in the enjoyment of your properties, your liberties, your laws, and your religion, under a sovereign of happier destinies than the ill-starred Boabdil."

The volatile population were touched by the humanity of their sovereign—they agreed to adhere to the capitulation, and there was even a faint shout of "Long live Boabdil the unfor-

* Mariana.

tunate!" and they all returned to their homes in perfect tranquillity.

Boabdil immediately sent missives to king Ferdinand, apprizing him of these events, and of his fears lest further delay should produce new tumults. He proposed, therefore, to surrender the city on the following day. The Castilian sovereigns assented, with great satisfaction; and preparations were made in city and camp for this great event, that was to seal the fate Granada.

It was a night of doleful lamentings, within the walls of the Alhambra; for the household of Boabdil were preparing to take a last farewell of that delightful abode. All the royal treasures, and the most precious effects of the Alhambra, were hastily packed upon mules; the beautiful apartments were despoiled, with tears and wailings, by their own inhabitants. Before the dawn of day, a mournful cavalcade moved obscurely out of a postern gate of the Alhambra, and departed through one of the most retired quarters of the city. It was composed of the family of the unfortunate Boabdil, which he sent off thus privately, that they might not be exposed to the eyes of scoffers, or the exultation of the enemy. The mother of Boabdil, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, rode on in silence, with dejected yet dignified demeanor; but his wife Zorayma, and all the females of his household, gave way to loud lamentations, as they looked back upon their favorite abode, now a mass of gloomy towers behind them. They were attended by the ancient domestics of the household, and by a small guard of veteran Moors, loyally attached to the fallen monarch, and who would have sold their lives dearly in defence of his family. The city was yet buried in sleep, as they passed through its silent streets. The guards at the gate shed tears, as they opened it for their departure. They paused not, but proceeded along the banks of the Xenel on the road that leads to the Al-puxarras, until they arrived at a hamlet at some distance from the city, where they halted, and waited until they should be joined by king Boabdil.

CHAPTER LIV.

SURRENDER OF GRANADA.

THE sun had scarcely begun to shed his beams upon the summits of the snowy mountains which rise above Granada, when the Christian camp was in motion. A detachment of horse and foot, led by distinguished cavaliers, and accompanied by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila, proceeded to take possession of the Alhambra and the towers. It had been stipulated in the capitulation, that the detachment sent for this purpose should not enter by the streets of the city; a road had therefore been opened, outside of the walls, leading by the Puerta de los Milinos, or the Gate of the Mills, to the summit of the Hill of Martyrs, and across the hill to a postern-gate of the Alhambra.

When the detachment arrived at the summit of the hill, the Moorish king came forth from the gate, attended by a handful of cavaliers, leaving his vizier Yusef Abed Comixa to deliver up the palace. "Go, senior," said he to the commander of the detachment, "go and take possession of those fortresses, which Allah has bestowed upon your powerful sovereigns, in punishment of the sins of the Moors." He said no more, but passed mournfully on, along the same road by which the Spanish cavaliers had come descending to the vega, to meet the Catholic sovereigns. The troops entered the Alhambra, the gates of which were wide open, and all its splendid courts and halls silent and deserted.

In the mean time, the Christian court and army poured out of the city of Santa Fé, and advanced across the vega. The king and queen, with the prince and princess, and the dignitaries and ladies of the court, took the lead, accompanied by the different orders of monks and friars, and surrounded by the royal guards splendidly arrayed. The procession moved slowly forward, and paused at the village of Armilla, at the distance of half a league from the city.

The sovereigns waited here with impatience, their eyes fixed on the lofty tower of the Alhambra, watching for the appointed signal of possession. The time that had elapsed since the departure of the detachment, seemed to them more than necessary

for the purpose, and the anxious mind of Ferdinand began to entertain doubts of some commotion in the city. At length they saw the silver cross, the great standard of this crusade, elevated on the Torre de la Vala, or Great Watch-Tower, and sparkling in the sunbeams. This was done by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila. Beside it was planted the pennon of the glorious apostle St. James, and a great shout of "Santiago! Santiago!" rose throughout the army. Lastly was reared the royal standard by the king of arms, with the shout of "Castile! Castile! For king Ferdinand and queen Isabella!" The words were echoed by the whole army, with acclamations that resounded across the vega. At sight of these signals of possession, the sovereigns sank upon their knees, giving thanks to God for this great triumph; the whole assembled host followed their example, and the choristers of the royal chapel broke forth into the solemn anthem of "*Te deum laudamus*."

The procession now resumed its march with joyful alacrity, to the sound of triumphant music, until they came to a small mosque, near the banks of the Xenel, and not far from the foot of the Hill of Martyrs, which edifice remains to the present day, consecrated as the hermitage of St. Sebastian. Here the sovereigns were met by the unfortunate Boabdil, accompanied by about fifty cavaliers and domestics. As he drew near, he would have dismounted in token of homage, but Ferdinand prevented him. He then proffered to kiss the king's hand, but this sign of vassalage was likewise declined; whereupon, not to be outdone in magnanimity, he leaned forward and kissed the right arm of Ferdinand. Queen Isabella also refused to receive this ceremonial of homage, and, to console him under his adversity, delivered to him his son, who had remained as hostage ever since Boabdil's liberation from captivity. The Moorish monarch pressed his child to his bosom with tender emotion, and they seemed mutually endeared to each other by their misfortunes.*

He then delivered the keys of the city to king Ferdinand, with an air of mingled melancholy and resignation: "These keys," said he, "are the last relics of the Arabian empire in Spain: thine, oh king, are our trophies, our kingdom, and our person. Such is the will of God! Receive them with the clemency thou hast promised, and which we look for at thy hands."†

* Zurita, Anales de Aragon.

† Abarca, Anales de Aragon, Rey 30, c. 3

King Ferdinand restrained his exultation into an air of serene magnanimity. "Doubt not our promises," replied he, "nor that thou shalt regain from our friendship the prosperity of which the fortune of war has deprived thee."

On receiving the keys, king Ferdinand handed them to the queen; she in her turn presented them to her son prince Juan, who delivered them to the count de Tendilla, that brave and loyal cavalier being appointed alcaide of the city, and captain-general of the kingdom of Granada.

Having surrendered the last symbol of power, the unfortunate Boabdil continued on towards the Alpuxarras, that he might not behold the entrance of the Christians into his capital. His devoted band of cavaliers followed him in gloomy silence; but heavy sighs burst from their bosoms, as shouts of joy and strains of triumphant music were borne on the breeze from the victorious army.

Having rejoined his family, Boabdil set forward with a heavy heart for his allotted residence in the valley of Purchena. At two leagues' distance, the cavalcade, winding into the skirts of the Alpuxarras, ascended an eminence commanding the last view of Granada. As they arrived at this spot, the Moors paused involuntarily, to take a farewell gaze at their beloved city, which a few steps more would shut from their sight for ever. Never had it appeared so lovely in their eyes. The sunshine, so bright in that transparent climate, lit up each tower and minaret, and rested gloriously upon the crowning battlements of the Alhambra; while the vega spread its enamelled bosom of verdure below, glistening with the silver windings of the Xenel. The Moorish cavaliers gazed with a silent agony of tenderness and grief upon that delicious abode, the scene of their loves and pleasures. While they yet looked, a light cloud of smoke burst forth from the citadel, and presently a peal of artillery, faintly heard, told that the city was taken possession of, and the throne of the Moslem kings was lost for ever. The heart of Boabdil, softened by misfortunes and overcharged with grief, could no longer contain itself: "Allah Acbar! God is great!" said he; but the words of resignation died upon his lips, and he burst into a flood of tears.

His mother, the intrepid sultana Ayxa la Horra, was indignant at his weakness: "You do well," said she, "to weep like a woman, for what you failed to defend like a man!"

The vizier Aben Comixa endeavored to console his royal

master. "Consider, sire," said he, "that the most signal misfortunes often render men as renowned as the most prosperous achievements, provided they sustain them with magnanimity."

The unhappy monarch, however, was not to be consoled; his tears continued to flow. "Allah Acbar!" exclaimed he; "when did misfortunes ever equal mine?"

From this circumstance, the hill, which is not far from the Padul, took the name of Feg Allah Acbar; but the point of view commanding the last prospect of Granada, is known among Spaniards by the name of *El ultimo suspiro del Moro*; or, "The last sigh of the Moor."

CHAPTER LV.

HOW THE CASTILIAN SOVEREIGNS TOOK POSSESSION OF GRANADA.

WHEN the Castilian sovereigns had received the keys of Granada from the hands of Boabdil el Chico, the royal army resumed its triumphant march. As it approached the gates of the city, in all the pomp of courtly and chivalrous array, a procession of a different kind came forth to meet it. This was composed of more than five hundred Christian captives, many of whom had languished for years in Moorish dungeons. Pale and emaciated, they came clanking their chains in triumph, and shedding tears of joy. They were received with tenderness by the sovereigns. The king hailed them as good Spaniards, as men loyal and brave, as martyrs to the holy cause; the queen distributed liberal relief among them with her own hands, and they passed on before the squadrons of the army, singing hymns of jubilee.*

The sovereigns did not enter the city on this day of its surrender, but waited until it should be fully occupied by their troops, and public tranquillity insured. The marques de Villena and the count de Tendilla, with three thousand cavalry and as many infantry, marched in and took possession, accompanied by the proselyte prince Cidi Yahye, now known by the Christian appellation of Don Pedro de Granada, who was appointed chief alguazil of the city, and had charge

* Abarca, lib. sup. Zurita, &c.

of the Moorish inhabitants, and by his son the late prince Alnayar, now Don Alonzo de Granada, who was appointed admiral of the fleets. In a little while, every battlement glistened with Christian helms and lances, the standard of the faith and of the realm floated from every tower, and the thundering salvoes of the ordnance told that the subjugation of the city was complete.

The grandees and cavaliers now knelt and kissed the hands of the king and queen and the prince Juan, and congratulated them on the acquisition of so great a kingdom; after which, the royal procession returned in state to Santa Fé.

It was on the sixth of January, the day of kings and festival of the Epiphany, that the sovereigns made their triumphal entry. The king and queen (says the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida) looked, on this occasion, as more than mortal; the venerable ecclesiastics, to whose advice and zeal this glorious conquest ought in a great measure to be attributed, moved along with hearts swelling with holy exultation, but with chastened and downcast looks of edifying humility; while the hardy warriors, in tossing plumes and shining steel, seemed elevated with a stern joy, at finding themselves in possession of this object of so many toils and perils. As the streets resounded with the tramp of steed and swelling peals of music, the Moors buried themselves in the deepest recesses of their dwellings. There they bewailed in secret the fallen glory of their race, but suppressed their groans, lest they should be heard by their enemies and increase their triumph.

The royal procession advanced to the principal mosque, which had been consecrated as a cathedral. Here the sovereigns offered up prayers and thanksgivings, and the choir of the royal chapel chanted a triumphant anthem, in which they were joined by all the courtiers and cavaliers. Nothing (says Fray Antonio Agapida) could exceed the thankfulness to God of the pious king Ferdinand, for having enabled him to eradicate from Spain the empire and name of that accursed heathen race, and for the elevation of the cross in that city wherein the impious doctrines of Mahomet had so long been cherished. In the fervor of his spirit, he supplicated from Heaven a continuance of its grace, and that this glorious triumph might be perpetuated.* The prayer of the pious

* The words of Fray Antonio Agapida are little more than an echo of those of the worthy Jesuit father Mariana. (L. 25. c. 18.)

monarch was responded by the people, and even his enemies were for once convinced of his sincerity.

When the religious ceremonies were concluded, the court ascended to the stately palace of the Alhambra, and entered by the great gate of Justice. The halls lately occupied by turbaned infidels now rustled with stately dames and Christian courtiers, who wandered with eager curiosity over this far-famed palace, admiring its verdant courts and gushing fountains, its halls decorated with elegant arabesques and storied with inscriptions, and the splendor of its gilded and brilliantly painted ceilings.

It had been a last request of the unfortunate Boabdil, and one which showed how deeply he felt the transition of his fate, that no person might be permitted to enter or depart by the gate of the Alhambra, through which he had sallied forth to surrender his capital. His request was granted; the portal was closed up, and remains so to the present day—a mute memorial of that event.*

The Spanish sovereigns fixed their throne in the presence-chamber of the palace, so long the seat of Moorish royalty. Hither the principal inhabitants of Granada repaired, to pay them homage and kiss their hands in token of vassalage; and their example was followed by deputies from all the towns and fortresses of the Alpuxarras, which had not hitherto submitted.

Thus terminated the war of Granada, after ten years of incessant fighting; equalling (says Fray Antonio Agapida) the far-famed siege of Troy in duration, and ending, like that, in the capture of the city. Thus ended also the dominion of

* Garibay, *Compend. Hist.* lib. 40. c. 42. The existence of this gateway, and the story connected with it, are perhaps known to few; but were identified, in the researches made to verify this history. The gateway is at the bottom of the great tower, at some distance from the main body of the Alhambra. The tower has been rent and ruined by gunpowder, at the time when the fortress was evacuated by the French. Great masses lie around, half covered by vines and fig-trees. A poor man, by the name of Matteo Ximenes, who lives in one of the halls among the ruins of the Alhambra, where his family has resided for many generations, pointed out the gateway, still closed up with stones. He remembered to have heard his father and grandfather say, that it had always been stopped up, and that out of it king Boabdil had gone when he surrendered Granada. The route of the unfortunate king may be traced from thence across the garden of the convent of Los Martyros, and down a ravine beyond, through a street of gipsy caves and hovels, by the gate of Los Molinos, and so on to the Hermitage of St. Sebastian. None but an antiquarian, however, will be able to trace it, unless aided by the humble historian of the place, Matteo Ximenes.

the Moors in Spain, having endured seven hundred and seventy-eight years, from the memorable defeat of Roderick, the last of the Goths, on the banks of the Guadalete. The authentic Agapida is uncommonly particular in fixing the epoch of this event. This great triumph of our holy Catholic faith, according to his computation, took place in the beginning of January, in the year of our Lord 1492, being 3655 years from the population of Spain by the patriarch Tubal; 3797 from the general deluge; 5453 from the creation of the world, according to Hebrew calculation; and in the month Rabic, in the eight hundred and ninety-seventh year of the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet; whom may God confound! saith the pious Agapida.

APPENDIX.

FATE OF BOABDIL EL CHICO.

THE CHRONICLE OF THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA is finished; but the reader may be desirous of knowing the subsequent fortunes of some of the principal personages. The unfortunate Boabdil retired to the valley of Purchena, where a small but fertile territory had been allotted him, comprising several towns, with all their rights and revenues. Great estates had likewise been bestowed on his vizier Yusef Aben Comixa and his valiant relation and friend Yusef Venegas, both of whom resided near him. Were it in the heart of man in the enjoyment of present competence to forget past splendor, Boabdil might at length have been happy. Dwelling in the bosom of a delightful valley, surrounded by obedient vassals, devoted friends, and a loving family, he might have looked back upon his past career as upon a troubled and terrific dream, and might have thanked his stars that he had at length awaked to sweet and tranquil security. But the dethroned prince could never forget that he had once been a monarch; and the remembrance of the regal splendors of Granada, made all present comforts contemptible in his eyes. No exertions were spared by Ferdinand and Isabella to induce him to embrace the Catholic religion; but he remained true to the faith of his fathers, and it added not a little to his humiliation, to live a vassal under Christian sovereigns.

It is probable that his residence in the kingdom was equally irksome to the politic Ferdinand, who could not feel perfectly secure in his newly conquered territories, while there was one within their bounds who might revive pretensions to the throne. A private bargain was therefore made, in the year 1496, between Ferdinand and Yusef Aben Comixa, in which the latter, as vizier of Boabdil, undertook to dispose of his master's scanty territory, for eighty thousand ducats of gold. This, it is affirmed, was done without the consent or knowledge of Boabdil; but the vizier probably thought he was acting for the best.

The shrewd Ferdinand does not appear to have made any question about the right of the vizier to make the sale, but paid the money with secret exultation. Yusef Aben Comixa loaded the treasure upon mules, and departed joyfully for the Alpuxarras. He spread the money in triumph before Boabdil: "Senior," said he, "I have observed that as long as you live here, you are exposed to constant peril. The Moors are rash and irritable; they may make some sudden insurrection, elevate your standard as a pretext, and thus overwhelm you and your friends with utter ruin. I have observed also that you pine away with grief, being continually reminded in this country that you were once its sovereign, but never more must hope to reign. I have put an end to these evils. Your territory is sold—behold the price of it. With this gold you may buy far greater possessions in Africa, where you may live in honor and security."

When Boabdil heard these words, he burst into a sudden transport of rage, and, drawing his scimitar, would have sacrificed the officious Yusef on the spot, had not the attendants interfered, and hurried the vizier from his presence.

Boabdil was not of a vindictive spirit, and his anger soon passed away. He saw that the evil was done, and he knew the spirit of the politic Ferdinand too well to hope that he would retract the bargain. Gathering together the money, therefore, and all his jewels and precious effects, he departed with his family and household for a port where a vessel had been carefully provided by the Castilian king to transport them to Africa.

A crowd of his former subjects witnessed his embarkation. As the sails were unfurled and swelled to the breeze, and the vessel parted from the land, the spectators would fain have given him a parting cheering; but the humbled state of their once proud sovereign forced itself upon their minds, and the

ominous surname of his youth rose involuntarily to their tongues: "Farewell, Boabdil! Allah preserve thee, *El Zogoybi!*" burst spontaneously from their lips. The unlucky appellation sank into the heart of the expatriated monarch, and tears dimmed his eyes as the snowy summits of the mountains of Granada gradually faded from his view.

He was received with welcome at the court of his relation, Muley Ahmed, King of Fez, and resided for many years in his territories. How he passed his life, whether repining or resigned, history does not mention. The last we find recorded of him is in the year 1536, thirty-four years after the surrender of Granada, when he followed the King of Fez to the field, to quell the rebellion of two brothers named Xerifes. The armies came in sight of each other, on the banks of the Guadiswed, at the ford of Bacuba. The river was deep, the banks were high and broken; for three days the armies remained firing at each other across the stream, neither venturing to attempt the dangerous ford.

At length the King of Fez divided his army into three battalions; the first led on by his son, and by Boabdil el Chico. They boldly dashed across the ford, scrambled up the opposite bank, and attempted to keep the enemy employed until the other battalions should have time to cross. The rebel army, however, attacked them with such fury, that the son of the King of Fez and several of the bravest alcaides, were slain upon the spot; multitudes were driven back into the river, which was already crowded with passing troops. A dreadful confusion took place; the horse trampled upon the foot; the enemy pressed on them with fearful slaughter; those who escaped the sword perished by the stream; the river was choked by the dead bodies of men and horses, and by the scattered baggage of the army. In this scene of horrible carnage fell Boabdil, truly called *El Zogoybi*, or the unlucky; an instance, says the ancient chronicler, of the scornful caprice of fortune, dying in defence of the kingdom of another, after wanting spirit to die in defence of his own.*

* Marmol, *Descrip. de Africa*, p. 1, l. 2, c. 40. Idem, *Hist. Reb. de los Moros*, lib. 1, c. 21.

NOTE.—A portrait of Boabdil el Chico is to be seen in the picture-gallery of the Generalife. He is represented with a mild, handsome face, a fair complexion, and yellow hair. His dress is of yellow brocade, relieved with black velvet, and he has a black velvet cap, surmounted with a crown. In the armory of Madrid are two suits of armor, said to have belonged to him. One is of solid steel, with very little ornament, the helmet closed. From the proportions of these suits of armor, he must have been of full stature and vigorous form.

DEATH OF THE MARQUES OF CADIZ.

THE renowned Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marques, Duke of Cadiz, was unquestionably the most distinguished among the cavaliers of Spain, for his zeal, enterprise, and heroism in the great crusade of Granada. He began the war by the capture of Alhama; he was engaged in almost every inroad and siege of importance, during its continuance; and he was present at the surrender of the capital, which was the closing scene of the conquest. The renown he thus acquired was sealed by his death, which happened in the forty-eighth year of his age, almost immediately at the close of his triumphs, and before a leaf of his laurels had time to wither. He died at his palace in the city of Seville, on the 27th day of August, 1492, but a few months after the surrender of Granada, and of an illness caused by the exposures and fatigues he had undergone in this memorable war. That honest chronicler, Andres Bernaldes, the curate of Los Palacios, who was a contemporary of the marques, draws his portrait from actual knowledge and observation. He was universally cited (says he) as the most perfect model of chivalrous virtue of the age. He was temperate, chaste, and rigidly devout; a benignant commander, a valiant defender of his vassals, a great lover of justice, and an enemy to all flatterers, liars, robbers, traitors, and poltroons.

His ambition was of a lofty kind—he sought to distinguish himself and his family, by heroic and resounding deeds; and to increase the patrimony of his ancestors, by the acquisition of castles, domains, vassals, and other princely possessions. His recreations were all of a warlike nature; he delighted in geometry as applied to fortifications, and spent much time and treasure in erecting and repairing fortresses. He relished music, but of a military kind—the sound of clarions and sackbuts, of drums and trumpets. Like a true cavalier, he was a protector of the sex on all occasions, and an injured woman never applied to him in vain for redress. His prowess was so well known, and his courtesy to the fair, that the ladies of the court, when they accompanied the queen to the wars, rejoiced to find themselves under his protection; for wherever his banner was displayed, the Moors dreaded to adventure. He was a faithful and devoted friend, but a formidable enemy; for he

was slow to forgive, and his vengeance was persevering and terrible.

The death of this good cavalier spread grief and lamentation throughout all ranks, for he was universally honored and beloved. His relations, dependants, and companions in arms, put on mourning for his loss; and so numerous were they, that half of Seville was clad in black. None, however, deplored his death more deeply and sincerely than his friend and chosen companion, Don Alonzo de Aguilar.

The funeral ceremonies were of the most solemn and sumptuous kind. The body of the marques was arrayed in a costly shirt, a doublet of brocade, a sayo or long robe of black velvet, a marlota or Moorish tunic of brocade that reached to the feet, and scarlet stockings. His sword, superbly gilt, was girded to his side, as he used to wear it when in the field. Thus magnificently attired, the body was inclosed in a coffin, which was covered with black velvet, and decorated with a cross of white damask. It was then placed on a sumptuous bier, in the centre of the great hall of the palace. Here the duchess made great lamentation over the body of her lord, in which she was joined by her train of damsels and attendants, as well as by the pages and esquires, and innumerable vassals of the marques.

In the close of the evening, just before the Ave Maria, the funeral procession issued from the palace. Ten banners were borne around the bier, the particular trophies of the marques, won from the Moors by his valor in individual enterprises, before King Ferdinand had commenced the war of Granada. The procession was swelled by an immense train of bishops, priests, and friars of different orders, together with the civil and military authorities, and all the chivalry of Seville, headed by the Count of Cifuentes, at that time intendente or commander of the city. It moved slowly and solemnly through the streets, stopping occasionally, and chanting litanies and responses. Two hundred and forty waxen tapers shed a light like the day about the bier. The balconies and windows were crowded with ladies, who shed tears as the funeral train passed by; while the women of the lower classes were loud in their lamentations, as if bewailing the loss of a father or a brother. On approaching the convent of St. Augustine, the monks came forth with the cross and tapers, and eight censers, and conducted the body into the church, where it lay in state until all the vigils were performed, by the different orders; after which it was deposited in the family tomb of the Ponces

in the same church, and the ten banners were suspended over the sepulchre.*

The tomb of the valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, with his banners mouldering above it, remained for ages an object of veneration with all who had read or heard of his virtues and achievements. In the year 1810, however, the chapel was sacked by the French, its altars overturned, and the sepulchres of the family of Ponces shattered to pieces. The present duchess of Benevente, the worthy descendent of this illustrious and heroic line, has since piously collected the ashes of her ancestors, restored the altar, and repaired the chapel. The sepulchres, however, were utterly destroyed; an inscription in gold letters, on the wall of the chapel, to the right of the altar, is all that denotes the place of sepulture of the brave Ponce de Leon.

THE LEGEND OF THE DEATH OF DON ALONZO DE AGUILAR.

To such as feel an interest in the fortunes of the valiant Don Alonzo de Aguilar, the chosen friend and companion in arms of Ponce de Leon, marques of Cadiz, and one of the most distinguished heroes of the war of Granada, a few particulars of his remarkable fate will not be unacceptable. They are found among the manuscripts of the worthy padre Fray Antonio Agapida, and appear to have been appended to this Chronicle.

For several years after the conquest of Granada, the country remained feverish and unquiet. The zealous efforts of the Catholic clergy to effect the conversion of the infidels, and the pious coercion used for that purpose by government, exasperated the stubborn Moors of the mountains. Several missionaries were maltreated; and in the town of Dayrin, two of them were seized, and exhorted, with many menaces, to embrace the Moslem faith; on their resolutely refusing, they were killed with staves and stones, by the Moorish women and children, and their bodies burnt to ashes.†

Upon this event, a body of Christian cavaliers assembled in Andalusia to the number of eight hundred, and, without waiting for orders from the king, revenged the death of these mar-

* Cura de los Palacios, c. 104.

† Ibid, c. 165.

tyrs, by plundering and laying waste the Moorish towns and villages. The Moors fled to the mountains, and their cause was espoused by many of their nation, who inhabited those rugged regions. The storm of rebellion began to gather, and mutter its thunders in the Alpuxarras. They were echoed from the Serrania of Ronda, ever ready for rebellion; but the strongest hold of the insurgents was in the Sierra Vermeja, or chain of Red Mountains, which lie near the sea, and whose savage rocks and precipices may be seen from Gibraltar.

When king Ferdinand heard of these tumults, he issued a proclamation ordering all the Moors of the insurgent regions to leave them within ten days, and repair to Castile; giving secret instructions, however, that those who should voluntarily embrace the Christian faith might be permitted to remain. At the same time, he ordered Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and the counts of Ureña and Cifuentes, to march against the rebels.

Don Alonzo de Aguilar was at Cordova when he received the commands of the king. "What force is allotted us for this expedition?" said he. On being told, he perceived that the number of troops was far from adequate. "When a man is dead," said he, "we send four men into his house to bring forth the body. We are now sent to chastise these Moors, who are alive, vigorous in open rebellion, and ensconced in their castles; yet they do not give us man to man." These words of the brave Alonzo de Aguilar were afterwards frequently repeated; but though he saw the desperate nature of the enterprise, he did not hesitate to undertake it.

Don Alonzo was at that time in the fifty-first year of his age. He was a veteran warrior, in whom the fire of youth was yet unquenched, though tempered by experience. The greater part of his life had been passed in the camp and in the field, until danger was as his natural element. His muscular frame had acquired the firmness of iron, without the rigidity of age. His armor and weapons seemed to have become a part of his nature, and he sat like a man of steel on his powerful war-horse.

He took with him, on this expedition, his son, Don Pedro de Cordova, a youth of bold and generous spirit, in the freshness of his days and armed and arrayed with all the bravery of a young Spanish cavalier. When the populace of Cordova beheld the veteran father, the warrior of a thousand battles, leading forth his youthful son to the field, they bethought themselves of the family appellation: "Behold," cried they,

"the eagle teaching his young to fly! Long live the valiant line of Aguilar!"*

The prowess of Don Alonzo, and of his companions in arms, was renowned throughout the Moorish towns. At their approach, therefore, numbers of the Moors submitted, and hastened to Ronda to embrace Christianity. Among the mountaineers, however, there were many of the Gaudules, a fierce tribe from Africa, too proud of spirit to bend their necks to the yoke. At their head was a Moor named El Feri of Ben Estepar, renowned for strength and courage. At his instigations, his followers gathered together their families and most precious effects, placed them on mules, and, driving before them their flocks and herds, abandoned their valleys, and retired up the craggy passes of the Sierra Vermeja. On the summit was a fertile plain, surrounded by rocks and precipices, which formed a natural fortress. Here El Feri placed all the women and children, and all the property. By his orders, his followers piled great stones on the rocks and cliffs, which commanded the defiles and the steep sides of the mountain, and prepared to defend every pass that led to his place of refuge.

The Christian commanders arrived, and pitched their camp before the town of Monarda, a strong place, curiously fortified, and situated at the foot of the highest part of the Sierra Vermeja. Here they remained for several days, unable to compel a surrender. They were separated from the skirt of the mountain by a deep barranca or ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a small stream. The Moors, commanded by El Feri, drew down from their mountain height, and remained on the opposite side of the brook, to defend a pass which led up to their strong-hold.

One afternoon, a number of Christian soldiers, in mere bravado, seized a banner, crossed the brook, and, scrambling up the opposite bank, attacked the Moors. They were followed by numbers of their companions, some in aid, some in emulation, but most in hope of booty. A sharp action ensued on the mountain side. The Moors were greatly superior in number, and had the vantage ground. When the counts of Ureña and Cifuentes beheld this skirmish, they asked Don Alonzo de Aguilar his opinion: "My opinion," said he, "was given at Cordova, and remains the same; this is a desperate enterprise; however, the Moors are at hand, and if they suspect weakness

* *Aguilar*—the Spanish for Eagle.

in us, it will increase their courage and our peril. Forward, then, to the attack, and I trust in God we shall gain a victory." So saying he led his troops into the battle.*

¶ On the skirts of the mountain were several level places, like terraces; here the Christians pressed valiantly upon the Moors, and had the advantage; but the latter retreated to the steep and craggy heights, from whence they hurled darts and rocks upon their assailants. They defended their passes and defiles with ferocious valor, but were driven from height to height, until they reached the plain on the summit of the mountain, where their wives and children were sheltered. Here they would have made a stand; but Alonzo de Aguilar, with his son Don Pedro, charged upon them at the head of three hundred men, and put them to flight with dreadful carnage. While they were pursuing the flying enemy, the rest of the army, thinking the victory achieved, dispersed themselves over the little plain in search of plunder. They pursued the shrieking females, tearing off their necklaces, bracelets, and anklets of gold; and they found so much treasure of various kinds collected in this spot, that they threw by their armor and weapons, to load themselves with booty.

Evening was closing. The Christians, intent upon spoil, had ceased to pursue the Moors, and the latter were arrested in their flight by the cries of their wives and children. Their fierce leader, El Feri, threw himself before them: "Friends, soldiers," cried he, "whither do you fly? Whither can you seek refuge, where the enemy cannot follow you? Your wives, your children, are behind you—turn and defend them; you have no chance for safety but from the weapons in your hands."

The Moors turned at his words. They beheld the Christians scattered about the plain, many of them without armor, and all encumbered with spoil. "Now is the time!" shouted El Feri; "charge upon them, while laden with your plunder. I will open a path for you!" He rushed to the attack, followed by his Moors, with shouts and cries that echoed through the mountains. The scattered Christians were seized with panic, and, throwing down their booty, began to fly in all directions. Don Alonzo de Aguilar advanced his banner, and endeavored to rally them. Finding his horse of no avail in these rocky heights, he dismounted, and caused his men to do the same;

* Bleda, L. 5, c. 26.

he had a small band of tried followers, with which he opposed a bold front to the Moors, calling on the scattered troops to rally in the rear.

Night had completely closed. It prevented the Moors from seeing the smallness of the force with which they were contending; and Don Alonzo and his cavaliers dealt their blows so vigorously, that, aided by the darkness, they seemed multiplied to ten times their number. Unfortunately, a small cask of gunpowder blew up, near to the scene of action. It shed a momentary but brilliant light over all the plain, and on every rock and cliff. The Moors beheld, with surprise, that they were opposed by a mere handful of men, and that the greater part of the Christians were flying from the field. They put up loud shouts of triumph. While some continued the conflict with redoubled ardor, others pursued the fugitives, hurling after them stones and darts, and discharging showers of arrows. Many of the Christians, in their terror and their ignorance of the mountains, rushed headlong from the brinks of precipices, and were dashed in pieces.

Don Alonzo de Aguilar still maintained his ground, but, while some of the Moors assailed him in front, others galled him with all kinds of missiles from the impending cliffs. Some of the cavaliers, seeing the hopeless nature of the conflict, proposed that they should abandon the height and retreat down the mountain: "No," said Don Alonzo, proudly: "never did the banner of the house of Aguilar retreat one foot in the field of battle." He had scarcely uttered these words, when his son Don Pedro was stretched at his feet. A stone hurled from a cliff had struck out two of his teeth, and a lance passed quivering through his thigh. The youth attempted to rise, and, with one knee on the ground, to fight by the side of his father. Don Alonzo, finding him wounded, urged him to quit the field. "Fly, my son!" said he; "let us not put every thing at venture upon one hazard. Conduct thyself as a good Christian, and live to comfort and honor thy mother."

Don Pedro still refused to leave his side. Whereupon Don Alonzo ordered several of his followers to bear him off by force. His friend Don Francisco Alvarez of Cordova, taking him in his arms, conveyed him to the quarters of the count of Ureña, who had halted on the height, at some distance from the scene of battle, for the purpose of rallying and succoring the fugitives. Almost at the same moment, the count beheld his own son, Don Pedro Giron, brought in grievously wounded.

In the mean time, Don Alonzo, with two hundred cavaliers, maintained the unequal contest. Surrounded by foes, they fell, one after another, like so many noble stags encircled by the hunters. Don Alonzo was the last survivor, without horse, and almost without armor—his corselet unlaced, and his bosom gashed with wounds. Still he kept a brave front towards the enemy, and, retiring between two rocks, defended himself with such valor, that the slain lay in a heap before him.

He was assailed in this retreat by a Moor of surpassing strength and fierceness. The contest was for some time doubtful; but Don Alonzo received a wound in the head, and another in the breast, that made him stagger. Closing and grappling with his foe, they had a desperate struggle, until the Christian cavalier, exhausted by his wounds, fell upon his back. He still retained his grasp upon his enemy: "Think not," cried he, "thou hast an easy prize; know that I am Don Alonzo, he of Aguilar!"—"If thou art Don Alonzo," replied the Moor, "know that I am El Feri of Ben Estepar." They continued their deadly struggle, and both drew their daggers; but Don Alonzo was exhausted by seven ghastly wounds: while he was yet struggling, his heroic soul departed from his body, and he expired in the grasp of the Moor.

Thus fell Alonzo de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry—one of the most powerful grandees of Spain, for person, blood, estate, and office. For forty years he had made successful war upon the Moors—in childhood by his household and retainers, in manhood by the prowess of his arm, and in the wisdom and valor of his spirit. His pennon had always been foremost in danger; he had been general of armies, viceroy of Andalusia, and the author of glorious enterprises, in which kings were vanquished, and mighty alcaides and warriors laid low. He had slain many Moslem chiefs with his own arm, and among others the renowned Ali Atar of Loxa, fighting foot to foot, on the banks of the Xenel. His judgment, discretion, magnanimity, and justice vied with his prowess. He was the fifth lord of his warlike house that fell in battle with the Moors.

"His soul," observes the worthy padre Abarca, "it is believed, ascended to heaven, to receive the reward of so Christian a captain; for that very day he had armed himself with the sacraments of confession and communion."*

* Abacra, *Anales de Aragon*, Rey xxx. cap. ii.

The Moors, elated with their success, pursued the fugitive Christians down the defiles and sides of the mountains. It was with the utmost difficulty that the count de Ureña could bring off a remnant of his forces from that disastrous height. Fortunately, on the lower slope of the mountain, they found the rear-guard of the army, led by the count de Cifuentes, who had crossed the brook and the ravine to come to their assistance. As the fugitives came flying in headlong terror down the mountain, it was with difficulty the count kept his own troops from giving way in panic, and retreating in confusion across the brook. He succeeded, however, in maintaining order, in rallying the fugitives, and checking the fury of the Moors: then, taking his station on a rocky eminence, he maintained his post until morning; sometimes sustaining violent attacks, at other times rushing forth and making assaults upon the enemy. When morning dawned, the Moors ceased to combat, and drew up to the summit of the mountain.

It was then that the Christians had time to breathe, and to ascertain the dreadful loss they had sustained. Among the many valiant cavaliers who had fallen, was Don Francisco Ramirez of Madrid, who had been captain-general of artillery throughout the war of Granada, and had contributed greatly by his valor and ingenuity to that renowned conquest. But all other griefs and cares were forgotten, in anxiety for the fate of Don Alonzo de Aguilar. His son, Don Pedro de Cordova, had been brought off with great difficulty from the battle, and afterwards lived to be marques of Priego; but of Don Alonzo nothing was known, except that he was left with a handful of cavaliers, fighting valiantly against an overwhelming force.

As the rising sun lighted up the red cliffs of the mountains, the soldiers watched with anxious eyes, if perchance his pennon might be descried, fluttering from any precipice or defile; but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The trumpet-call was repeatedly sounded, but empty echoes alone replied. A silence reigned about the mountain summit, which showed that the deadly strife was over. Now and then a wounded warrior came dragging his feeble steps from among the clefts and rocks; but, on being questioned, he shook his head mournfully, and could tell nothing of the fate of his commander.

The tidings of this disastrous defeat, and of the perilous situation of the survivors, reached king Ferdinand at Gran-

ada; he immediately marched at the head of all the chivalry of his court, to the mountains of Ronda. His presence, with a powerful force, soon put an end to the rebellion. A part of the Moors were suffered to ransom themselves, and to embark for Africa; others were made to embrace Christianity; and those of the towns where the Christian missionaries had been massacred were sold as slaves. From the conquered Moors, the mournful but heroic end of Alonzo de Aguilar was ascertained.

On the morning after the battle, when the Moors came to strip and bury the dead, the body of Don Alonzo was found, among those of more than two hundred of his followers, many of them alcaides and cavaliers of distinction. Though the person of Don Alonzo was well known to the Moors, being so distinguished among them both in peace and war, yet it was so covered and disfigured with wounds, that it could with difficulty be recognized. They preserved it with great care, and, on making their submission, delivered it up to king Ferdinand. It was conveyed with great state to Cordova, amidst the tears and lamentations of all Andalusia. When the funeral train entered Cordova, and the inhabitants saw the coffin containing the remains of their favorite hero, and the war-horse, led in mournful trappings, on which they had so lately seen him sally forth from their gates, there was a general burst of grief throughout the city. The body was interred, with great pomp and solemnity, in the church of St. Hypolito.

Many years afterwards, his grand-daughter, Doña Catalina of Aguilar and Cordova, marchioness of Priego, caused his tomb to be altered. On examining the body, the head of a lance was found among the bones, received without doubt among the wounds of his last mortal combat. The name of this accomplished and Christian cavalier has ever remained a popular theme of the chronicler and poet, and is endeared to the public memory by many of the historical ballads and songs of his country. For a long time the people of Cordova were indignant at the brave count de Ureña, who they thought had abandoned Don Alonzo in his extremity; but the Castilian monarch acquitted him of all charge of the kind, and continued him in honor and office. It was proved that neither he nor his people could succor Don Alonzo, or even know of his peril, from the darkness of the night. There is a mournful little Spanish ballad or romance, which breathes the public grief on this occasion; and the populace, on the return of the

count de Ureña to Cordova, assailed him with one of its plaintive and reproachful verses:—

Count Ureña! count Ureña!
Tell us, where is Don Alonzo!

(Dezid Conde de Ureña!
Don Alonzo, donde queda?)*

* Bleda, L. 5, c. 26.

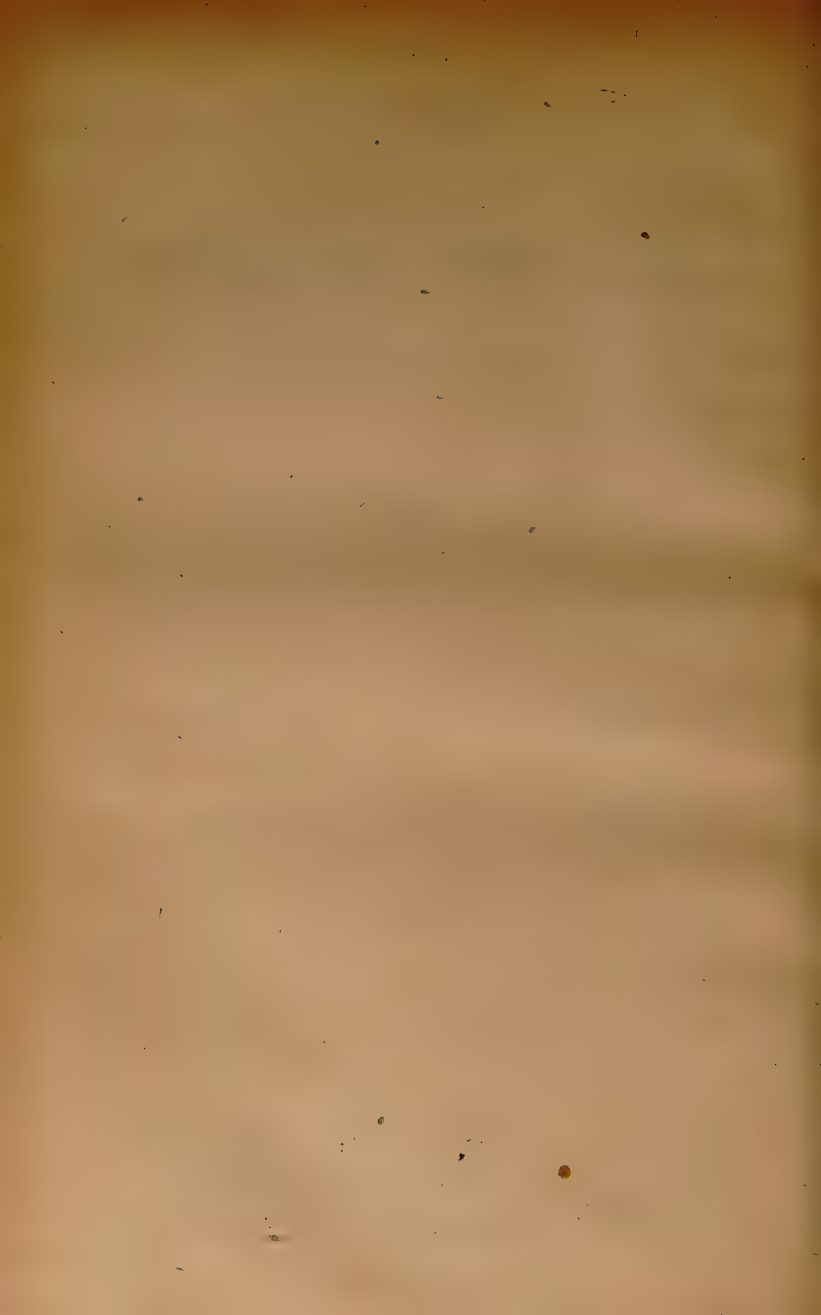
THE END.

THE
CONQUEST OF SPAIN.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.

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PREFACE.

FEW events in history have been so signal and striking in their main circumstances, and so overwhelming and enduring in their consequences, as that of the conquest of Spain by the Saracens; yet there are few where the motives, and characters, and actions of the agents have been enveloped in more doubt and contradiction. As in the memorable story of the Fall of Troy, we have to make out, as well as we can, the veritable details through the mists of poetic fiction; yet poetry has so combined itself with, and lent its magic colouring to, every fact, that to strip it away would be to reduce the story to a meagre skeleton and rob it of all its charms. The storm of Moslem invasion that swept so suddenly over the peninsula, silenced for a time the faint voice of the muse, and drove the sons of learning from their cells. The pen was thrown aside to grasp the sword and spear, and men were too much taken up with battling against the evils which beset them on every side, to find time or inclination to record them.

When the nation had recovered in some degree from the effects of this astounding blow, or rather, had become accustomed to the tremendous reverse which it produced, and sage men sought to inquire and write the particulars, it was too late to ascertain them in their exact verity. The gloom and melancholy that had overshadowed the land, had given birth to a thousand superstitious fancies; the woes and terrors of the past were clothed with supernatural miracles and portents, and the actors in the fearful drama had already assumed the dubious characteristics of romance. Or if a writer from among the conquerors undertook to touch upon the theme, it was embellished with all the wild extravagancies of an oriental imagination; which afterwards stole into the graver works of the monkish historians.

Hence, the earliest chronicles which treat of the downfall of Spain, are apt to be tinctured with those saintly miracles which

savour of the pious labours of the cloister, or those fanciful fictions that betray their Arabian authors. Yet, from these apocryphal sources, the most legitimate and accredited Spanish histories have taken their rise, as pure rivers may be traced up to the fens and mantled pools of a morass. It is true, the authors, with cautious discrimination, have discarded those particulars too startling for belief, and have culled only such as, from their probability and congruity, might be safely recorded as historical facts; yet, scarce one of these but has been connected in the original with some romantic fiction, and, even in its divorced state, bears traces of its former alliance.

To discard, however, every thing wild and marvellous in this portion of Spanish history, is to discard some of its most beautiful, instructive, and national features; it is to judge of Spain by the standard of probability suited to tamer and more prosaic countries. Spain is virtually a land of poetry and romance, where every-day life partakes of adventure, and where the least agitation or excitement carries every thing up into extravagant enterprise and daring exploit. The Spaniards, in all ages, have been of swelling and braggart spirit, soaring in thought, pompous in word, and valiant, though vain-glorious, in deed. Their heroic aims have transcended the cooler conceptions of their neighbours, and their reckless daring has borne them on to achievements which prudent enterprise could never have accomplished. Since the time, too, of the conquest and occupation of their country by the Arabs, a strong infusion of oriental magnificence has entered into the national character, and rendered the Spaniard distinct from every other nation of Europe.

In the following pages, therefore, the author has ventured to dip more deeply into the enchanted fountains of old Spanish chronicles, than has usually been done by those who, in modern times, have treated of the eventful period of the conquest; but in so doing, he trusts he will illustrate more fully the character of the people and the times. He has thought proper to throw these records into the form of legends, not claiming for them the authenticity of sober history, yet giving nothing that has not historical foundation. All the facts herein contained, however extravagant some of them may be deemed, will be found in the works of sage and reverend chroniclers of yore, growing side by side with long acknowledged truths, and might be supported by learned and imposing references in the margin.

LEGENDS OF THE CONQUEST OF SPAIN.

THE LEGEND OF DON RODERICK.*

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS OF SPAIN—OF THE MISRULE OF WITIZA THE WICKED.

SPAIN, or Iberia as it was called in ancient days, has been a country harassed from the earliest times by the invader. The Celts, the Greeks, the Phenicians, the Carthaginians, by turns or simultaneously, infringed its territories, drove the native Iberians from their rightful homes, and established colonies and founded cities in the land. It subsequently fell into the all-grasping power of Rome, remaining for some time a subjugated province; and when that gigantic empire crumbled into pieces, the Suevi, the Alani, and the Vandals, those barbarians of the north, overran and ravaged this devoted country, and portioned out the soil among them.

Their sway was not of long duration. In the fifth century the Goths, who were then the allies of Rome, undertook the reconquest of Iberia, and succeeded, after a desperate struggle of three years' duration. They drove before them the barbarous hordes, their predecessors, intermarried and incorporated themselves with the original inhabitants, and founded a powerful and splendid empire, comprising the Iberian peninsula, the ancient Narbonnaise, afterwards called Gallia Gotica, or

* Many of the facts in this legend are taken from an old chronicle, written in quaint and antiquated Spanish, and professing to be a translation from the Arabian chronicle of the Moor Rasis, by Mohammed, a Moslem writer, and Gil Perez, a Spanish priest. It is supposed to be a piece of literary mosaic work, made up from both Spanish and Arabian chronicles: yet, from this work most of the Spanish historians have drawn their particulars relative to the fortunes of Don Roderick.

Gothic Gaul, and a part of the African coast called Tingitania. A new nation was, in a manner, produced by this mixture of the Goths and Iberians. Sprung from a union of warrior races, reared and nurtured amidst the din of arms, the Gothic Spaniards, if they may be so termed, were a warlike, unquiet, yet high-minded and heroic people. Their simple and abstemious habits, their contempt for toil and suffering, and their love of daring enterprise, fitted them for a soldier's life. So addicted were they to war that, when they had no external foes to contend with, they fought with one another; and, when engaged in battle, says an old chronicler, the very thunders and lightnings of heaven could not separate them.*

For two centuries and a half the Gothic power remained unshaken, and the sceptre was wielded by twenty-five successive kings. The crown was elective, in a council of palatines, composed of the bishops and nobles, who, while they swore allegiance to the newly-made sovereign, bound him by a reciprocal oath to be faithful to his trust. Their choice was made from among the people, subject only to one condition, that the king should be of pure Gothic blood. But though the crown was elective in principle, it gradually became hereditary from usage, and the power of the sovereign grew to be almost absolute. The king was commander-in-chief of the armies; the whole patronage of the kingdom was in his hands; he summoned and dissolved the national councils; he made and revoked laws according to his pleasure; and, having ecclesiastical supremacy, he exercised a sway even over the consciences of his subjects.

The Goths, at the time of their inroad, were stout adherents to the Arian doctrines; but after a time they embraced the Catholic faith, which was maintained by the native Spaniards free from many of the gross superstitions of the church at Rome, and this unity of faith contributed more than any thing else to blend and harmonize the two races into one. The bishops and other clergy were exemplary in their lives, and aided to promote the influence of the laws and maintain the authority of the state. The fruits of regular and secure government were manifest in the advancement of agriculture, commerce, and the peaceful arts; and in the increase of wealth, of luxury, and refinement; but there was a gradual decline of the simple, hardy,

* Florian de Ocampo, lib. 3, c. 12. Justin, Abrev. Trog. Pomp. L. 44. Bleda, Cronica, L. 2, c. 3.

and warlike habits that had distinguished the nation in its semi-barbarous days.

Such was the state of Spain when, in the year of Redemption 701, Witiza was elected to the Gothic throne. The beginning of his reign gave promise of happy days to Spain. He redressed grievances, moderated the tributes of his subjects, and conducted himself with mingled mildness and energy in the administration of the laws. In a little while, however, he threw off the mask, and showed himself in his true nature, cruel and luxurious.

Two of his relatives, sons of a preceding king, awakened his jealousy for the security of his throne. One of them, named Favila, duke of Cantabria, he put to death, and would have inflicted the same fate upon his son Pelayo, but that the youth was beyond his reach, being preserved by Providence for the future salvation of Spain. The other object of his suspicion was Theodofredo, who lived retired from court. The violence of Witiza reached him even in his retirement. His eyes were put out, and he was immured within a castle at Cordova. Roderick, the youthful son of Theodofredo, escaped to Italy, where he received protection from the Romans.

Witiza, now considering himself secure upon the throne, gave the reins to his licentious passions, and soon, by his tyranny and sensuality, acquired the appellation of Witiza the Wicked. Despising the old Gothic continence, and yielding to the example of the sect of Mahomet, which suited his lascivious temperament, he indulged in a plurality of wives and concubines, encouraging his subjects to do the same. Nay, he even sought to gain the sanction of the church to his excesses, promulgating a law by which the clergy were released from their vows of celibacy, and permitted to marry and to entertain paramours.

The sovereign Pontiff Constantine threatened to depose and excommunicate him, unless he abrogated this licentious law; but Witiza set him at defiance, threatening, like his Gothic predecessor Alaric, to assail the eternal city with his troops, and make spoil of her accumulated treasures.* “We will adorn our damsels,” said he, “with the jewels of Rome, and replenish our coffers from the mint of St. Peter.”

Some of the clergy opposed themselves to the innovating spirit of the monarch, and endeavoured from the pulpits to

* Chron. de Luitprando, 709. Abarca, *Anales de Aragon* (el Mahometismo, Fol. 5).

rally the people to the pure doctrines of their faith; but they were deposed from their sacred office, and banished as seditious mischief-makers. The church of Toledo continued refractory; the archbishop Sindaredo, it is true, was disposed to accommodate himself to the corruptions of the times, but the prebendaries battled intrepidly against the new laws of the monarch, and stood manfully in defence of their vows of chastity. "Since the church of Toledo will not yield itself to our will," said Witiza, "it shall have two husbands." So saying, he appointed his own brother Oppas, at that time archbishop of Seville, to take a seat with Sindaredo in the episcopal chair of Toledo, and made him primate of Spain. He was a priest after his own heart, and seconded him in all his profligate abuses.

It was in vain the denunciations of the church were fulminated from the chair of St. Peter; Witiza threw off all allegiance to the Roman Pontiff, threatening with pain of death those who should obey the papal mandates. "We will suffer no foreign ecclesiastic, with triple crown," said he, "to domineer over our dominions."

The Jews had been banished from the country during the preceding reign, but Witiza permitted them to return, and even bestowed upon their synagogues privileges of which he had despoiled the churches. The children of Israel, when scattered throughout the earth by the fall of Jerusalem, had carried with them into other lands the gainful arcana of traffic, and were especially noted as opulent money-changers and curious dealers in gold and silver and precious stones; on this occasion, therefore, they were enabled, it is said, to repay the monarch for his protection by bags of money, and caskets of sparkling gems, the rich product of their oriental commerce.

The kingdom at this time enjoyed external peace, but there were symptoms of internal discontent. Witiza took the alarm; he remembered the ancient turbulence of the nation, and its proneness to internal feuds. Issuing secret orders, therefore, in all directions, he dismantled most of the cities, and demolished the castles and fortresses that might serve as rallying points for the factious. He disarmed the people also, and converted the weapons of war into the implements of peace. It seemed, in fact, as if the millennium were dawning upon the land, for the sword was beaten into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook.

While thus the ancient martial fire of the nation was extin-

guished, its morals likewise were corrupted. The altars were abandoned, the churches closed, wide disorder and sensuality prevailed throughout the land, so that, according to the old chroniclers, within the compass of a few short years, "Witiza the Wicked taught all Spain to sin."

CHAPTER II.

THE RISE OF DON RODERICK—HIS GOVERNMENT.

Woe to the ruler who founds his hope of sway on the weakness or corruption of the people. The very measures taken by Witiza to perpetuate his power ensured his downfall. While the whole nation, under his licentious rule, was sinking into vice and effeminacy, and the arm of war was unstrung, the youthful Roderick, son of Theodofredo, was training up for action in the stern but wholesome school of adversity. He instructed himself in the use of arms; became adroit and vigorous by varied exercises; learned to despise all danger, and inured himself to hunger and watchfulness and the rigour of the seasons.

His merits and misfortunes procured him many friends among the Romans; and when, being arrived at a fitting age, he undertook to revenge the wrongs of his father and his kindred, a host of brave and hardy soldiers flocked to his standard. With these he made his sudden appearance in Spain. The friends of his house and the disaffected of all classes hastened to join him, and he advanced rapidly and without opposition, through an unarmed and enervated land.

Witiza saw too late the evil he had brought upon himself. He made a hasty levy, and took the field with a scantily equipped and undisciplined host, but was easily routed and made prisoner, and the whole kingdom submitted to Don Roderick.

The ancient city of Toledo, the royal residence of the Gothic kings, was the scene of high festivity and solemn ceremonial on the coronation of the victor. Whether he was elected to the throne according to the Gothic usage, or seized it by the right of conquest, is a matter of dispute among historians, but all agree that the nation submitted cheerfully to his

sway, and looked forward to prosperity and happiness under their newly elevated monarch. His appearance and character seemed to justify the anticipation. He was in the splendour of youth, and of a majestic presence. His soul was bold and daring, and elevated by lofty desires. He had a sagacity that penetrated the thoughts of men, and a magnificent spirit that won all hearts. Such is the picture which ancient writers give of Don Roderick, when, with all the stern and simple virtues unimpaired, which he had acquired in adversity and exile, and flushed with the triumph of a pious revenge, he ascended the Gothic throne.

Prosperity, however, is the real touchstone of the human heart: no sooner did Roderick find himself in possession of the crown, than the love of power and the jealousy of rule were awakened in his breast. His first measure was against Witiza, who was brought in chains into his presence. Roderick beheld the captive monarch with an unpitying eye, remembering only his wrongs and cruelties to his father. "Let the evils he has inflicted on others be visited upon his own head," said he; "as he did unto Theodofredo, even so be it done unto him." So the eyes of Witiza were put out, and he was thrown into the same dungeon at Cordova in which Theodofredo had languished. There he passed the brief remnant of his days in perpetual darkness, a prey to wretchedness and remorse.

Roderick now cast an uneasy and suspicious eye upon Evan and Siseburto, the two sons of Witiza. Fearful lest they should foment some secret rebellion, he banished them the kingdom. They took refuge in the Spanish dominions in Africa, where they were received and harboured by Requila, governor of Tangier, out of gratitude for favours which he had received from their late father. There they remained, to brood over their fallen fortunes, and to aid in working out the future woes of Spain.

Their uncle Oppas, bishop of Seville, who had been made co-partner, by Witiza, in the archiepiscopal chair at Toledo, would have likewise fallen under the suspicion of the king; but he was a man of consummate art, and vast exterior sanctity, and won upon the good graces of the monarch. He was suffered, therefore, to retain his sacred office at Seville; but the see of Toledo was given in charge to the venerable Urbino; and the law of Witiza was revoked that dispensed the clergy from their vows of celibacy.

The jealousy of Roderick for the security of his crown was

soon again aroused, and his measures were prompt and severe. Having been informed that the governors of certain castles and fortresses in Castile and Andalusia had conspired against him, he caused them to be put to death and their strongholds to be demolished. He now went on to imitate the pernicious policy of his predecessor, throwing down walls and towers, disarming the people, and thus incapacitating them from rebellion. A few cities were permitted to retain their fortifications, but these were intrusted to alcaides in whom he had especial confidence; the greater part of the kingdom was left defenceless; the nobles, who had been roused to temporary manhood during the recent stir of war, sunk back into the inglorious state of inaction which had disgraced them during the reign of Witiza, passing their time in feasting and dancing to the sound of loose and wanton minstrelsy.* It was scarcely possible to recognize in these idle wassailers and soft voluptuaries the descendants of the stern and frugal warriors of the frozen north; who had braved flood and mountain, and heat and cold, and had battled their way to empire across half a world in arms.

They surrounded their youthful monarch, it is true, with a blaze of military pomp. Nothing could surpass the splendour of their arms, which were embossed and enamelled, and enriched with gold and jewels and curious devices; nothing could be more gallant and glorious than their array; it was all plume and banner and silken pageantry, the gorgeous trappings for tilt and tourney and courtly revel; but the iron soul of war was wanting.

How rare it is to learn wisdom from the misfortunes of others. With the fate of Witiza full before his eyes, Don Roderick indulged in the same pernicious errors, and was doomed, in like manner, to prepare the way for his own perdition.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE LOVES OF RODERICK AND THE PRINCESS ELYATA.

As yet the heart of Roderick, occupied by the struggles of his early life, by warlike enterprises, and by the inquietudes of newly-gotten power, had been insensible to the charms of

* Mariana, Hist. Esp. L. 6, c. 21.

women; but in the present voluptuous calm, the amorous propensities of his nature assumed their sway. There are divers accounts of the youthful beauty who first found favour in his eyes, and was elevated by him to the throne. We follow in our legend the details of an Arabian chronicler,* authenticated by a Spanish poet.† Let those who dispute our facts, produce better authority for their contradiction.

Among the few fortified places that had not been dismantled by Don Roderick, was the ancient city of Denia, situated on the Mediterranean coast, and defended on a rock-built castle that overlooked the sea.

The Alcayde of the castle, with many of the people of Denia, was one day on his knees in the chapel, imploring the Virgin to allay a tempest which was strewing the coast with wrecks, when a sentinel brought word that a Moorish cruiser was standing for the land. The Alcayde gave orders to ring the alarm bells, light signal fires on the hill tops, and rouse the country, for the coast was subject to cruel maraudings from the Barbary curisers.

In a little while the horsemen of the neighbourhood were seen pricking along the beach, armed with such weapons as they could find, and the Alcayde and his scanty garrison descended from the hill. In the mean time the Moorish bark came rolling and pitching towards the land. As it drew near, the rich carving and gilding with which it was decorated, its silken bandaroles and banks of crimson oars, showed it to be no warlike vessel, but a sumptuous galiot destined for state and ceremony. It bore the marks of the tempest; the masts were broken, the oars shattered, and fragments of snowy sails and silken awnings were fluttering in the blast.

As the galiot grounded upon the sand, the impatient rabble rushed into the surf to capture and make spoil; but were awed into admiration and respect by the appearance of the illustrious company on board. There were Moors of both sexes sumptuously arrayed, and adorned with precious jewels, bearing the demeanour of persons of lofty rank. Among them shone conspicuous a youthful beauty, magnificently attired, to whom all seemed to pay reverence.

Several of the Moors surrounded her with drawn swords, threatening death to any that approached; others sprang

* *Perdida de España*, por Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique, lib. 1.

† *Lope de Vega*.

from the bark, and throwing themselves on their knees before the Alcayde, implored him, by his honour and courtesy as a knight, to protect a royal virgin from injury and insult.

"You behold before you," said they, "the only daughter of the king of Algiers, the betrothed bride of the son of the king of Tunis. We were conducting her to the court of her expecting bridegroom, when a tempest drove us from our course, and compelled us to take refuge on your coast. Be not more cruel than the tempest, but deal nobly with that which even sea and storm have spared."

The Alcayde listened to their prayers. He conducted the princess and her train to the castle, where every honour due to her rank was paid her. Some of her ancient attendants interceded for her liberation, promising countless sums to be paid by her father for her ransom; but the Alcayde turned a deaf ear to all their golden offers. "She is a royal captive," said he; "it belongs to my sovereign alone to dispose of her." After she had reposed, therefore, for some days at the castle, and recovered from the fatigue and terror of the seas, he caused her to be conducted, with all her train, in magnificent state to the court of Don Roderick.

The beautiful Elyata* entered Toledo more like a triumphant sovereign than a captive. A chosen band of Christian horsemen, splendidly armed, appeared to wait upon her as a mere guard of honour. She was surrounded by the Moorish damsels of her train, and followed by her own Moslem guards, all attired with the magnificence that had been intended to grace her arrival at the court of Tunis. The princess was arrayed in bridal robes, woven in the most costly looms of the orient; her diadem sparkled with diamonds, and was decorated with the rarest plumes of the bird of paradise, and even the silken trappings of her palfrey, which swept the ground, were covered with pearls and precious stones. As this brilliant cavalcade crossed the bridge of the Tagus, all Toledo poured forth to behold it, and nothing was heard throughout the city but praises of the wonderful beauty of the princess of Algiers. King Roderick came forth, attended by the chivalry of his court, to receive the royal captive. His recent voluptuous life had disposed him for tender and amorous affections, and at the first sight of the beautiful Elyata he was enraptured with her charms. Seeing her face clouded with sorrow and anxiety,

* By some she is called Zara.

he soothed her with gentle and courteous words, and conducting her to a royal palace, "Behold," said he, "thy habitation, where no one shall molest thee; consider thyself at home in the mansion of thy father, and dispose of every thing according to thy will."

Here the princess passed her time, with the female attendants who had accompanied her from Algiers; and no one but the king was permitted to visit her, who daily became more and more enamoured of his lovely captive, and sought by tender assiduity to gain her affections. The distress of the princess at her captivity was soothed by this gentle treatment. She was of an age when sorrow cannot long hold sway over the heart. Accompanied by her youthful attendants, she ranged the spacious apartments of the palace, and sported among the groves and alleys of its garden. Every day the remembrance of the paternal home grew less and less painful, and the king became more and more amiable in her eyes; and when, at length, he offered to share his heart and throne with her, she listened with downcast looks and kindling blushes, but with an air of resignation:

One obstacle remained to the complete fruition of the monarch's wishes, and this was the religion of the princess. Roderick forthwith employed the archbishop of Toledo to instruct the beautiful Elyata in the mysteries of the Christian faith. The female intellect is quick in perceiving the merits of new doctrines; the archbishop, therefore, soon succeeded in converting, not merely the princess, but most of her attendants, and a day was appointed for their public baptism. The ceremony was performed with great pomp and solemnity, in the presence of all the nobility and chivalry of the court. The princess and her damsels, clad in white, walked on foot to the cathedral, while numerous beautiful children, arrayed as angels, strewed their path with flowers; and the archbishop meeting them at the portal, received them, as it were, into the bosom of the church. The princess abandoned her Moorish appellation of Elyata, and was baptized by the name of Exilona, by which she was thenceforth called, and has generally been known in history.

The nuptials of Roderick and the beautiful convert took place shortly afterwards, and were celebrated with great magnificence. There were jousts, and tourneys, and banquets, and other rejoicings, which lasted twenty days, and were attended by the principal nobles from all parts of Spain. After

these were over, such of the attendants of the princess as refused to embrace christianity and desired to return to Africa, were dismissed with munificent presents; and an embassy was sent to the king of Algiers, to inform him of the nuptials of his daughter, and to proffer him the friendship of King Roderick.*

CHAPTER IV.

OF COUNT JULIAN.

For a time Don Roderick lived happily with his young and beautiful queen, and Toledo was the seat of festivity and splendour. The principal nobles throughout the kingdom repaired to his court to pay him homage, and to receive his commands; and none were more devoted in their reverence than those who were obnoxious to suspicion from their connexion with the late king.

Among the foremost of these was Count Julian, a man destined to be infamously renowned in the dark story of his country's woes. He was of one of the proudest Gothic families, lord of Consuegra and Algeziras, and connected by marriage with Witiza and the Bishop Oppas; his wife, the Countess Frandina, being their sister. In consequence of this connexion, and of his own merits, he had enjoyed the highest dignities and commands, being one of the Espatorios, or royal sword-bearers; an office of the greatest confidence about the person of the sovereign.† He had, moreover, been entrusted with the military government of the Spanish possessions on the African coast of the strait, which at that time were threatened by the Arabs of the East, the followers of Mahomet, who were advancing their victorious standard to the extremity of

* "Como esta Infanta era muy hermosa, y el Rey [Don Rodrigo] dispuesta y gentil hombre, entro por medio el amor y aficion, y junto con el regalo con que la avia mandado hospedar y servir ful causa que el rey persuadio esta Infanta, que si se tornava a su ley de christiano la tomaria por muger, y que la haria señora de sus Reynos. Con esta persuasion ella feu contenta, y aviendose vuelto christiana, se caso con ella, y se celebraron sus bodas con muchas fiestas y regozijos, como era razon."—Abulcasim, Conq'st de Espan. cap. 3.

† Condes Espatorios; so called from the drawn swords of ample size and breadth with which they kept guard in the ante-chambers of the Gothic kings. Comes Spathariorum, custodum corporis Regis Profectus. Hunc et Propospatharium appellatum existimo.—Patr. Pant. de Offic. Goth.

Western Africa. Count Julian established his seat of government at Ceuta, the frontier bulwark and one of the far-famed gates of the Mediterranean Sea. Here he boldly faced, and held in check, the torrent of Moslem invasion.

Don Julian was a man of an active, but irregular genius, and a grasping ambition; he had a love for power and grandeur, in which he was joined by his haughty countess; and they could ill brook the downfall of their house as threatened by the fate of Witiza. They had hastened, therefore, to pay their court to the newly elevated monarch, and to assure him of their fidelity to his interests.

Roderick was readily persuaded of the sincerity of Count Julian; he was aware of his merits as a soldier and a governor, and continued him in his important command: honouring him with many other marks of implicit confidence. Count Julian sought to confirm this confidence by every proof of devotion. It was a custom among the Goths to rear many of the children of the most illustrious families in the royal household. They served as pages to the king, and handmaids and ladies of honour to the queen, and were instructed in all manner of accomplishments befitting their gentle blood. When about to depart for Ceuta, to resume his command, Don Julian brought his daughter Florinda to present her to the sovereigns. She was a beautiful virgin that had not as yet attained to womanhood. "I confide her to your protection," said he to the king, "to be unto her as a father; and to have her trained in the paths of virtue. I can leave with you no dearer pledge of my loyalty."

King Roderick received the timid and blushing maiden into his paternal care; promising to watch over her happiness with a parent's eye, and that she should be enrolled among the most cherished attendants of the queen. With this assurance of the welfare of his child, Count Julian departed, well pleased, for his government at Ceuta.

CHAPTER V.

THE STORY OF FLORINDA.

THE beautiful daughter of Count Julian was received with great favour by the Queen Exilona and admitted among the noble damsels that attended upon her person. Here she lived

in honour and apparent security, and surrounded by innocent delights. To gratify his queen, Don Roderick had built for her rural recreation a palace without the walls of Toledo, on the banks of the Tagus. It stood in the midst of a garden, adorned after the luxurious style of the East. The air was perfumed by fragrant shrubs and flowers; the groves resounded with the song of the nightingale, while the gush of fountains and waterfalls, and the distant murmur of the Tagus, made it a delightful retreat during the sultry days of summer. The charm of perfect privacy also reigned throughout the place, for the garden walls were high, and numerous guards kept watch without to protect it from all intrusion.

In this delicious abode, more befitting an oriental voluptuary than a Gothic king, Don Roderick was accustomed to while away much of that time which should have been devoted to the toilsome cares of government. The very security and peace which he had produced throughout his dominions by his precautions to abolish the means and habitudes of war, had effected a disastrous change in his character. The hardy and heroic qualities which had conducted him to the throne, were softened in the lap of indulgence. Surrounded by the pleasures of an idle and effeminate court, and beguiled by the example of his degenerate nobles, he gave way to a fatal sensuality that had lain dormant in his nature during the virtuous days of his adversity. The mere love of female beauty had first enamoured him of Exilona, and the same passion, fostered by voluptuous idleness, now betrayed him into the commission of an act fatal to himself and Spain. The following is the story of his error as gathered from an old chronicle and legend.

In a remote part of the palace was an apartment devoted to the queen. It was like an eastern harem, shut up from the foot of man, and where the king himself but rarely entered. It had its own courts, and gardens, and fountains, where the queen was wont to recreate herself with her damsels, as she had been accustomed to do in the jealous privacy of her father's palace.

One sultry day, the king, instead of taking his siesta, or mid-day slumber, repaired to this apartment to seek the society of the queen. In passing through a small oratory, he was drawn by the sound of female voices to a casement overhung with myrtles and jessamines. It looked into an interior garden or court, set out with orange-trees, in the

midst of which was a marble fountain, surrounded by a grassy bank, enamelled with flowers.

It was the high noontide of a summer day, when, in sultry Spain, the landscape trembles to the eye, and all nature seeks repose, except the grasshopper, that pipes his lulling note to the herdsman as he sleeps beneath the shade.

Around the fountain were several of the damsels of the queen, who, confident of the sacred privacy of the place, were yielding in that cool retreat to the indulgence prompted by the season and the hour. Some lay asleep on the flowery bank; others sat on the margin of the fountain, talking and laughing, as they bathed their feet in its limpid waters, and King Roderrick beheld delicate limbs shining through the wave, that might rival the marble in whiteness.

Among the damsels was one who had come from the Barbary coast with the queen. Her complexion had the dark tinge of Mauritania, but it was clear and transparent, and the deep rich rose blushed through the lovely brown. Her eyes were black and full of fire, and flashed from under long silken eyelashes.

A sportive contest arose among the maidens as to the comparative beauty of the Spanish and Moorish forms; but the Mauritanian damsel revealed limbs of voluptuous symmetry that seemed to defy all rivalry.

The Spanish beauties were on the point of giving up the contest, when they bethought themselves of the young Florinda, the daughter of Count Julian, who lay on the grassy bank, abandoned to a summer slumber. The soft glow of youth and health mantled on her cheek; her fringed eyelashes scarcely covered their sleeping orbs; her moist and ruby lips were slightly parted, just revealing a gleam of her ivory teeth, while her innocent bosom rose and fell beneath her bodice, like the gentle swelling and sinking of a tranquil sea. There was a breathing tenderness and beauty in the sleeping virgin, that seemed to send forth sweetness like the flowers around her.

"Behold," cried her companions exultingly, "the champion of Spanish beauty!"

In their playful eagerness they half disrobed the innocent Florinda before she was aware. She awoke in time, however, to escape from their busy hands; but enough of her charms had been revealed to convince the monarch that they were not to be rivalled by the rarest beauties of Mauritania.

From this day the heart of Roderick was inflamed with a fatal passion. He gazed on the beautiful Florinda with fervid desire, and sought to read in her looks whether there was levity or wantonness in her bosom; but the eye of the damsel ever sunk beneath his gaze, and remained bent on the earth in virgin modesty.

It was in vain he called to mind the sacred trust reposed in him by Count Julian, and the promise he had given to watch over his daughter with paternal care; his heart was vitiated by sensual indulgence, and the consciousness of power had rendered him selfish in his gratifications.

Being one evening in the garden where the queen was diverting herself with her damsels, and coming to the fountain where he had beheld the innocent maidens at their sport, he could no longer restrain the passion that raged within his breast. Seating himself beside the fountain, he called Florinda to him to draw forth a thorn which had pierced his hand. The maiden knelt at his feet, to examine his hand, and the touch of her slender fingers thrilled through his veins. As she knelt, too, her amber locks fell in rich ringlets about her beautiful head, her innocent bosom palpitated beneath the crimson bodice, and her timid blushes increased the effulgence of her charms.

Having examined the monarch's hand in vain, she looked up in his face with artless perplexity.

"Señor," said she, "I can find no thorn, nor any sign of wound."

Don Roderick grasped her hand and pressed it to his heart. "It is here, lovely Florinda!" said he. "It is here! and thou alone canst pluck it forth!"

"My lord!" exclaimed the blushing and astonished maiden.

"Florinda!" said Don Roderick, "dost thou love me?"

"Señor," said she, "my father taught me to love and reverence you. He confided me to your care as one who would be as a parent to me, when he should be far distant, serving your majesty with life and loyalty. May God incline your majesty ever to protect me as a father." So saying, the maiden dropped her eyes to the ground, and continued kneeling: but her countenance had become deadly pale, and as she knelt she trembled.

"Florinda," said the king, "either thou dost not, or thou wilt not understand me. I would have thee love me, not as a father, nor as a monarch, but as one who adores thee. Why

dost thou start? No one shall know our loves; and, moreover, the love of a monarch inflicts no degradation like the love of a common man—riches and honours attend upon it. I will advance thee to rank and dignity, and place thee above the proudest females of my court. Thy father, too, shall be more exalted and endowed than any noble in my realm.”

The soft eye of Florinda kindled at these words. “Señor,” said she, “the line I spring from can receive no dignity by means so vile; and my father would rather die than purchase rank and power by the dishonour of his child. But I see,” continued she, “that your majesty speaks in this manner only to try me. You may have thought me light and simple, and unworthy to attend upon the queen. I pray your majesty to pardon me, that I have taken your pleasantry in such serious part.”

In this way the agitated maiden sought to evade the addresses of the monarch, but still her cheek was blanched, and her lip quivered as she spake.

The king pressed her hand to his lips with fervour. “May ruin seize me,” cried he, “if I speak to prove thee. My heart, my kingdom, are at thy command. Only be mine, and thou shalt rule absolute mistress of myself and my domains.”

The damsel rose from the earth where she had hitherto knelt, and her whole countenance glowed with virtuous indignation. “My lord,” said she, “I am your subject, and in your power; take my life if it be your pleasure, but nothing shall tempt me to commit a crime which would be treason to the queen, disgrace to my father, agony to my mother, and perdition to myself.” With these words she left the garden, and the king, for the moment, was too much awed by her indignant virtue to oppose her departure.

We shall pass briefly over the succeeding events of the story of Florinda, about which so much has been said and sung by chronicler and bard: for the sober page of history should be carefully chastened from all scenes that might inflame a wanton imagination,—leaving them to poems and romances, and such like highly seasoned works of fantasy and recreation.

Let it suffice to say, that Don Roderick pursued his suit to the beautiful Florinda, his passion being more and more inflamed by the resistance of the virtuous damsel. At length, forgetting what was due to helpless beauty, to his own honour as a knight, and his word as a sovereign, he triumphed over her weakness by base and unmanly violence.

There are not wanting those who affirm that the hapless Florinda lent a yielding ear to the solicitations of the monarch, and her name has been treated with opprobrium in several of the ancient chronicles and legendary ballads that have transmitted, from generation to generation, the story of the woes of Spain. In very truth, however, she appears to have been a guiltless victim, resisting, as far as helpless female could resist, the arts and intrigues of a powerful monarch, who had nought to check the indulgence of his will, and bewailing her disgrace with a poignancy that shows how dearly she had prized her honour.

In the first paroxysm of her grief she wrote a letter to her father, blotted with her tears and almost incoherent from her agitation. "Would to God, my father," said she, "that the earth had opened and swallowed me ere I had been reduced to write these lines. I blush to tell thee, what it is not proper to conceal. Alas, my father! thou hast entrusted thy lamb to the guardianship of the lion. Thy daughter has been dishonoured, the royal cradle of the Goths polluted, and our lineage insulted and disgraced. Hasten, my father, to rescue your child from the power of the spoiler, and to vindicate the honour of your house."

When Florinda had written these lines, she summoned a youthful esquire, who had been a page in the service of her father. "Saddle thy steed," said she, "and if thou dost aspire to knightly honour, or hope for lady's grace; if thou hast fealty for thy lord, or devotion to his daughter, speed swiftly upon my errand. Rest not, halt not, spare not the spur, but hie thee day and night until thou reach the sea; take the first bark, and haste with sail and oar to Ceuta, nor pause until thou give this letter to the count my father." The youth put the letter in his bosom. "Trust me, lady," said he, "I will neither halt, nor turn aside, nor cast a look behind, until I reach Count Julian." He mounted his fleet steed, sped his way across the bridge, and soon left behind him the verdant valley of the Tagus.

CHAPTER VI.

DON RODERICK RECEIVES AN EXTRAORDINARY EMBASSY.

THE heart of Don Roderick was not so depraved by sensuality, but that the wrong he had been guilty of toward the innocent Florinda, and the disgrace he had inflicted on her house, weighed heavy on his spirits, and a cloud began to gather on his once clear and unwrinkled brow.

Heaven, at this time, say the old Spanish chronicles, permitted a marvellous intimation of the wrath with which it intended to visit the monarch and his people, in punishment of their sins; nor are we, say the same orthodox writers, to startle and withhold our faith when we meet in the page of discreet and sober history with these signs and portents, which transcend the probabilities of ordinary life; for the revolutions of empires and the downfall of mighty kings are awful events, that shake the physical as well as the moral world, and are often announced by forerunning marvels and prodigious omens.

With such like cautious preliminaries do the wary but credulous historiographers of yore usher in a marvellous event of prophecy and enchantment, linked in ancient story with the fortunes of Don Roderick, but which modern doubters would fain hold up as an apocryphal tradition of Arabian origin.

Now, so it happened, according to the legend, that about this time, as King Roderick was seated one day on his throne, surrounded by his nobles, in the ancient city of Toledo, two men of venerable appearance entered the hall of audience. Their snowy beards descended to their breasts, and their gray hairs were bound with ivy. They were arrayed in white garments of foreign or antiquated fashion, which swept the ground, and were cinctured with girdles, wrought with the signs of the zodiac from which were suspended enormous bunches of keys of every variety of form. Having approached the throne and made obeisance: "Know, O king," said one of the old men, "that in days of yore, when Hercules of Libya, surnamed the Strong, had set up his pillars at the ocean strait, he erected a tower near to this ancient city of Toledo. He built it of prodigious strength, and finished it with magic art, shutting up within it a fearful secret, never to be penetrated without peril and disaster. To protect this terrible mystery he closed the entrance to the edifice with a ponderous door of iron,

secured by a great lock of steel, and he left a command that every king who should succeed him should add another lock to the portal; denouncing woe and destruction on him who should eventually unfold the secret of the tower.

"The guardianship of the portal was given to our ancestors, and has continued in our family, from generation to generation, since the days of Hercules. Several kings, from time to time, have caused the gate to be thrown open, and have attempted to enter, but have paid dearly for their temerity. Some have perished within the threshold, others have been overwhelmed with horror at tremendous sounds, which shook the foundations of the earth, and have hastened to reclose the door and secure it with its thousand locks. Thus, since the days of Hercules, the inmost recesses of the pile have never been penetrated by mortal man, and a profound mystery continues to prevail over this great enchantment. This, O king, is all we have to relate; and our errand is to entreat thee to repair to the tower and affix thy lock to the portal, as has been done by all thy predecessors." Having thus said, the ancient men made a profound reverence and departed from the presence chamber.*

Don Roderick remained for some time lost in thought after the departure of the men; he then dismissed all his court excepting the venerable Urbino, at that time archbishop of Toledo. The long white beard of this prelate bespoke his advanced age, and his overhanging eyebrows showed him a man full of wary counsel.

"Father," said the king, "I have an earnest desire to penetrate the mystery of this tower." The worthy prelate shook his hoary head. "Beware, my son," said he; "there are secrets hidden from man for his good. Your predecessors for many generations have respected this mystery, and have increased in might and empire. A knowledge of it, therefore, is not material to the welfare of your kingdom. Seek not then to indulge a rash and unprofitable curiosity, which is interdicted under such awful menaces."

"Of what importance," cried the king, "are the menaces of Hercules the Libyan? was he not a pagan; and can his enchantments have aught avail against a believer in our holy faith? Doubtless in this tower are locked up treasures of gold

* *Perdida de España*, por Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique, l. 1, c. 6. *Cronica del Rey Don Rodrigo*, por el Moro Rasis, l. 1, c. 1. Bleda, *Cron. cap. vii.*

and jewels, amassed in days of old, the spoils of mighty kings, the riches of the pagan world. My coffers are exhausted; I have need of supply; and surely it would be an acceptable act in the eyes of heaven, to draw forth this wealth which lies buried under profane and necromantic spells, and consecrate it to religious purposes."

The venerable archbishop still continued to remonstrate, but Don Roderick heeded not his counsel, for he was led on by his malignant star. "Father," said he, "it is in vain you attempt to dissuade me. My resolution is fixed. To-morrow I will explore the hidden mystery, or rather the hidden treasures, of this tower."

CHAPTER VII.

STORY OF THE MARVELLOUS AND PORTENTOUS TOWER.

THE morning sun shone brightly upon the cliff-built towers of Toledo, when King Roderick issued out of the gate of the city at the head of a numerous train of courtiers and cavaliers, and crossed the bridge that bestrides the deep rocky bed of the Tagus. The shining cavalcade wound up the road that leads among the mountains, and soon came in sight of the necromantic tower.

Of this renowned edifice marvels are related by the ancient Arabian and Spanish chroniclers, "and I doubt much," adds the venerable Agapida, "whether many readers will not consider the whole as a cunningly devised fable, sprung from an oriental imagination; but it is not for me to reject a fact which is recorded by all those writers who are the fathers of our national history; a fact, too, which is as well attested as most of the remarkable events in the story of Don Roderick. None but light and inconsiderate minds," continues the good friar, "do hastily reject the marvellous. To the thinking mind the whole world is enveloped in mystery, and every thing is full of type and portent. To such a mind the necromantic tower of Toledo will appear as one of those wondrous monuments of the olden time; one of those Egyptian and Chaldaic piles, storied with hidden wisdom and mystic prophecy, which have been devised in past ages, when man yet enjoyed an intercourse with high and spiritual natures, and when human foresight partook of divination."

This singular tower was round and of great height and grandeur, erected upon a lofty rock, and surrounded by crags and precipices. The foundation was supported by four brazen lions, each taller than a cavalier on horseback. The walls were built of small pieces of jasper and various coloured marbles, not larger than a man's hand; so subtilely joined, however, that, but for their different hues, they might be taken for one entire stone. They were arranged with marvellous cunning so as to represent battles and warlike deeds of times and heroes long since passed away, and the whole surface was so admirably polished that the stones were as lustrous as glass, and reflected the rays of the sun with such resplendent brightness as to dazzle all beholders.*

King Roderick and his courtiers arrived wondering and amazed at the foot of the rock: Here there was a narrow arched way cut through the living stone: the only entrance to the tower. It was closed by a massive iron gate covered with rusty locks of divers workmanship and in the fashion of different centuries, which had been affixed by the predecessors of Don Roderick. On either side of the portal stood the two ancient guardians of the tower, laden with the keys appertaining to the locks.

The king alighted, and approaching the portals, ordered the guardians to unlock the gate. The hoary-headed men drew back with terror. "Alas!" cried they, "what is it your majesty requires of us? Would you have the mischiefs of this tower unbound, and let loose to shake the earth to its foundations?"

The venerable archbishop Urbino likewise implored him not to disturb a mystery which had been held sacred from generation to generation within the memory of man, and which even Cæsar himself, when sovereign of Spain, had not ventured to invade. The youthful cavaliers, however, were eager to pursue the adventure, and encouraged him in his rash curiosity.

"Come what come may," exclaimed Don Roderick, "I am resolved to penetrate the mystery of this tower." So saying, he again commanded the guardians to unlock the portal. The ancient men obeyed with fear and trembling, but their hands shook with age, and when they applied the keys the locks were so rusted by time, or of such strange workmanship, that they resisted their feeble efforts, whereupon the young cavaliers

* From the minute account of the good friar, drawn from the ancient chronicles, it would appear that the walls of the tower were pictured in mosaic work.

pressed forward and lent their aid. Still the locks were so numerous and difficult, that with all their eagerness and strength a great part of the day was exhausted before the whole of them could be mastered.

When the last bolt had yielded to the key, the guardians and the reverend archbishop again entreated the king to pause and reflect. "Whatever is within this tower," said they, "is as yet harmless and lies bound under a mighty spell: venture not then to open a door which may let forth a flood of evil upon the land." But the anger of the king was roused, and he ordered that the portal should be instantly thrown open. In vain, however, did one after another exert his strength, and equally in vain did the cavaliers unite their forces, and apply their shoulders to the gate; though there was neither bar nor bolt remaining, it was perfectly immovable.

The patience of the king was now exhausted, and he advanced to apply his hand; scarcely, however, did he touch the iron gate, when it swung slowly open, uttering, as it were, a dismal groan, as it turned reluctantly upon its hinges. A cold, damp wind issued forth, accompanied by a tempestuous sound. The hearts of the ancient guardians quaked within them, and their knees smote together; but several of the youthful cavaliers rushed in, eager to gratify their curiosity, or to signalize themselves in this redoubtable enterprise. They had scarcely advanced a few paces, however, when they recoiled, overcome by the baleful air, or by some fearful vision.* Upon this, the king ordered that fires should be kindled to dispel the darkness, and to correct the noxious and long imprisoned air; he then led the way into the interior; but, though stout of heart, he advanced with awe and hesitation.

After proceeding a short distance, he entered a hall, or antechamber, on the opposite of which was a door, and before it, on a pedestal, stood a gigantic figure, of the colour of bronze, and of a terrible aspect. It held a huge mace, which it twirled incessantly, giving such cruel and resounding blows upon the earth as to prevent all further entrance.

The king paused at sight of this appalling figure, for whether it were a living being, or a statue of magic artifice, he could not tell. On its breast was a scroll, whereon was inscribed in large letters, "I do my duty."† After a little while Roderick plucked up heart, and addressed it with great solemnity:

* Bleda, *Cronica*, cap. 7.

† *Idem*.

"Whatever thou be," said he, "know that I come not to violate this sanctuary, but to inquire into the mystery it contains; I conjure thee, therefore, to let me pass in safety."

Upon this the figure paused with uplifted mace, and the king and his train passed unmolested through the door.

They now entered a vast chamber, of a rare and sumptuous architecture, difficult to be described. The walls were encrusted with the most precious gems, so joined together as to form one smooth and perfect surface. The lofty dome appeared to be self-supported, and was studded with gems, lustrous as the stars of the firmament. There was neither wood, nor any other common or base material to be seen throughout the edifice. There were no windows or other openings to admit the day, yet a radiant light was spread throughout the place, which seemed to shine from the walls, and to render every object distinctly visible.

In the centre of this hall stood a table of alabaster of the rarest workmanship, on which was inscribed in Greek characters, that Hercules Alcides, the Theban Greek, had founded this tower in the year of the world three thousand and six. Upon the table stood a golden casket, richly set round with precious stones, and closed with a lock of mother-of-pearl, and on the lid were inscribed the following words:

"In this coffer is contained the mystery of the tower. The hand of none but a king can open it; but let him beware! for marvellous events will be revealed to him, which are to take place before his death."

King Roderick boldly seized upon the casket. The venerable archbishop laid his hand upon his arm, and made a last remonstrance. "Forbear, my son!" said he; "desist while there is yet time. Look not into the mysterious decrees of Providence. God has hidden them in mercy from our sight, and it is impious to rend the veil by which they are concealed."

"What have I to dread from a knowledge of the future?" replied Roderick, with an air of haughty presumption. "If good be destined me, I shall enjoy it by anticipation; if evil, I shall arm myself to meet it." So saying, he rashly broke the lock.

Within the coffer he found nothing but a linen cloth, folded between two tablets of copper. On unfolding it he beheld painted on it figures of men on horseback, of fierce demeanour, clad in turbans and robes of various colours, after the fashion of the Arabs, with scimitars hanging from their necks and

cross-bows at their saddle-backs, and they carried banners and pennons with divers devices. Above them was inscribed in Greek characters, "Rash monarch! behold the men who are to hurl thee from thy throne, and subdue thy kingdom!"

At sight of these things the king was troubled in spirit, and dismay fell upon his attendants. While they were yet regarding the paintings, it seemed as if the figures began to move, and a faint sound of warlike tumult arose from the cloth, with the clash of cymbal and bray of trumpet, the neigh of steed and shout of army; but all was heard indistinctly, as if afar off, or in a reverie or dream. The more they gazed, the plainer became the motion, and the louder the noise; and the linen cloth rolled forth, and amplified, and spread out, as it were, a mighty banner, and filled the hall, and mingled with the air, until its texture was no longer visible, or appeared as a transparent cloud. And the shadowy figures appeared all in motion, and the din and uproar became fiercer and fiercer; and whether the whole were an animated picture, or a vision, or an array of embodied spirits, conjured up by supernatural power, no one present could tell. They beheld before them a great field of battle, where Christians and Moslems were engaged in deadly conflict. They heard the rush and tramp of steeds, the blast of trump and clarion, the clash of cymbal, and the stormy din of a thousand drums. There was the clash of swords, and maces, and battle-axes, with the whistling of arrows and the hurtling of darts and lances. The Christians quailed before the foe; the infidels pressed upon them and put them to utter rout; the standard of the cross was cast down, the banner of Spain was trodden under foot, the air resounded with shouts of triumph, with yells of fury, and with the groans of dying men. Amidst the flying squadrons King Roderick beheld a crowned warrior, whose back was towards him, but whose armour and device were his own, and who was mounted on a white steed that resembled his own war-horse Orelia. In the confusion of the flight, the warrior was dismounted and was no longer to be seen, and Orelia galloped wildly through the field of battle without a rider.

Roderick stayed to see no more, but rushed from the fatal hall, followed by his terrified attendants. They fled through the outer chamber, where the gigantic figure with the whirling mace had disappeared from his pedestal, and on issuing into the open air, they found the two ancient guardians of the tower lying dead at the portal, as though they had been

crushed by some mighty blow. All nature, which had been clear and serene, was now in wild uproar. The heavens were darkened by heavy clouds; loud bursts of thunder rent the air, and the earth was deluged with rain and rattling hail.

The king ordered that the iron portal should be closed, but the door was immovable, and the cavaliers were dismayed by the tremendous turmoil and the mingled shouts and groans that continued to prevail within. The king and his train hastened back to Toledo, pursued and pelted by the tempest. The mountains shook and echoed with the thunder, trees were uprooted and blown down, and the Tagus raged and roared and flowed above its banks. It seemed to the affrighted courtiers as if the phantom legions of the tower had issued forth and mingled with the storm; for amidst the claps of thunder and the howling of the wind, they fancied they heard the sound of the drums and trumpets, the shouts of armies, and the rush of steeds. Thus beaten by tempest and overwhelmed with horror, the king and his courtiers arrived at Toledo, clattering across the bridge of the Tagus, and entering the gate in headlong confusion as though they had been pursued by an enemy.

In the morning the heavens were again serene, and all nature was restored to tranquillity. The king, therefore, issued forth with his cavaliers, and took the road to the tower, followed by a great multitude, for he was anxious once more to close the iron door, and shut up those evils that threatened to overwhelm the land. But lo! on coming in sight of the tower, a new wonder met their eyes. An eagle appeared high in the air, seeming to descend from heaven. He bore in his beak a burning brand, and lighting on the summit of the tower, fanned the fire with his wings. In a little while the edifice burst forth into a blaze as though it had been built of rosin, and the flames mounted into the air with a brilliancy more dazzling than the sun; nor did they cease until every stone was consumed and the whole was reduced to a heap of ashes. Then there came a vast flight of birds, small of size and sable of hue, darkening the sky like a cloud; and they descended and wheeled in circles round the ashes, causing so great a wind with their wings that the whole was borne up into the air, and scattered throughout all Spain, and wherever a particle of that ashes fell it was as a stain of blood. It is furthermore recorded by ancient men and writers of former days, that all those on whom this dust fell were afterwards slain in battle, when the country was conquered by the Arabs, and that the destruction

of this necromantic tower was a sign and token of the approaching perdition of Spain.

"Let all those," concludes the cautious friar, "who question the verity of this most marvellous occurrence, consult those admirable sources of our history, the chronicle of the Moor Rasis, and the work entitled, *The Fall of Spain*, written by the Moor Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique. Let them consult, moreover, the venerable historian Bleda, and the cloud of other Catholic Spanish writers who have treated of this event, and they will find I have related nothing that has not been printed and published under the inspection and sanction of our holy mother church. God alone knoweth the truth of these things; I speak nothing but what has been handed down to me from times of old."

CHAPTER VIII.

COUNT JULIAN—HIS FORTUNES IN AFRICA.—HE HEARS OF THE DISHONOUR OF HIS CHILD—HIS CONDUCT THEREUPON.

THE course of our legendary narration now returns to notice the fortunes of Count Julian, after his departure from Toledo, to resume his government on the coast of Barbary. He left the Countess Frandina at Algeziras, his paternal domain, for the province under his command was threatened with invasion. In fact, when he arrived at Ceuta he found his post in imminent danger from the all-conquering Moslems. The Arabs of the east, the followers of Mahomet, having subjugated several of the most potent oriental kingdoms, had established their seat of empire at Damascus, where, at this time, it was filled by Waled Almanzor, surnamed "The Sword of God." From thence the tide of Moslem conquest had rolled on to the shores of the Atlantic, so that all Almagreb, or Western Africa, had submitted to the standard of the Prophet, with the exception of a portion of Tingitania, lying along the straits; being the province held by the Goths of Spain, and commanded by Count Julian. The Arab invaders were a hundred thousand strong, most of them veteran troops, seasoned in warfare and accustomed to victory. They were led by an old Arab General, Muza ben Nosier, to whom was confided the government of Almagreb; most of which he had himself conquered. The

ambition of this veteran was to make the Moslem conquest complete, by expelling the Christians from the African shores; with this view his troops menaced the few remaining Gothic fortresses of Tingitania, while he himself sat down in person before the walls of Ceuta. The Arab chieftain had been rendered confident by continual success, and thought nothing could resist his arms and the sacred standard of the Prophet. Impatient of the tedious delays of a siege, he led his troops boldly against the rock-built towers of Ceuta, and attempted to take the place by storm. The onset was fierce, and the struggle desperate; the swarthy sons of the desert were light and vigorous, and of fiery spirit, but the Goths, inured to danger on this frontier, retained the stubborn valour of their race, so impaired among their brethren in Spain. They were commanded, too, by one skilled in warfare and ambitious of renown. After a vehement conflict the Moslem assailants were repulsed from all points, and driven from the walls. Don Julian sallied forth and harassed them in their retreat, and so severe was the carnage that the veteran Muza was fain to break up his camp and retire confounded from the siege.

The victory at Ceuta resounded throughout Tingitania, and spread universal joy. On every side were heard shouts of exultation mingled with praises of Count Julian. He was hailed by the people, wherever he went, as their deliverer, and blessings were invoked upon his head. The heart of Count Julian was lifted up, and his spirit swelled within him; but it was with noble and virtuous pride, for he was conscious of having merited the blessings of his country.

In the midst of his exultation, and while the rejoicings of the people were yet sounding in his ears, the page arrived who bore the letter from his unfortunate daughter.

"What tidings from the king?" said the count, as the page knelt before him. "None, my lord," replied the youth; "but I bear a letter sent in all haste by the Lady Florinda."

He took the letter from his bosom and presented it to his lord. As Count Julian read it his countenance darkened and fell. "This," said he, bitterly, "is my reward for serving a tyrant; and these are the honours heaped on me by my country while fighting its battles in a foreign land. May evil overtake me, and infamy rest upon my name, if I cease until I have full measure of revenge."

Count Julian was vehement in his passions, and took no counsel in his wrath. His spirit was haughty in the extreme,

but destitute of true magnanimity, and when once wounded, turned to gall and venom. A dark and malignant hatred entered into his soul, not only against Don Roderick, but against all Spain; he looked upon it as the scene of his disgrace, a land in which his family was dishonoured, and, in seeking to avenge the wrongs he had suffered from his sovereign, he meditated against his native country one of the blackest schemes of treason that ever entered into the human heart.

The plan of Count Julian was to hurl King Roderick from his throne, and to deliver all Spain into the hands of the infidels. In concerting and executing this treacherous plot, it seemed as if his whole nature was changed; every lofty and generous sentiment was stifled, and he stooped to the meanest dissimulation. His first object was, to extricate his family from the power of the king, and to remove it from Spain before his treason should be known; his next, to deprive the country of its remaining means of defence against an invader.

With these dark purposes at heart, but with an open and serene countenance, he crossed to Spain and repaired to the court at Toledo. Wherever he came he was hailed with acclamation, as a victorious general, and appeared in the presence of his sovereign radiant with the victory at Ceuta. Concealing from King Roderick his knowledge of the outrage upon his house, he professed nothing but the most devoted loyalty and affection.

The king loaded him with favours; seeking to appease his own conscience by heaping honours upon the father in atonement of the deadly wrong inflicted upon his child. He regarded Count Julian, also, as a man able and experienced in warfare, and took his advice in all matters relating to the military affairs of the kingdom. The count magnified the dangers that threatened the frontier under his command, and prevailed upon the king to send thither the best horses and arms remaining from the time of Witiza, there being no need of them in the centre of Spain, in its present tranquil state. The residue, at his suggestion, was stationed on the frontiers of Gallia; so that the kingdom was left almost wholly without defence against any sudden irruption from the south.

Having thus artfully arranged his plans, and all things being prepared for his return to Africa, he obtained permission to withdraw his daughter from the court, and leave her with her mother, the Countess Frandina, who, he pretended, lay dangerously ill at Algeziras. Count Julian issued out of the gate

of the city, followed by a shining band of chosen followers, while beside him, on a palfrey, rode the pale and weeping Florinda. The populace hailed and blessed him as he passed, but his heart turned from them with loathing. As he crossed the bridge of the Tagus he looked back with a dark brow upon Toledo, and raised his mailed hand and shook it at the royal palace of King Roderick, which crested the rocky height. "A father's curse," said he, "be upon thee and thine! may desolation fall upon thy dwelling, and confusion and defeat upon thy realm!"

In his journeyings through the country, he looked round him with a malignant eye; the pipe of the shepherd, and the song of the husbandman, were as discord to his soul; every sight and sound of human happiness sickened him at heart; and, in the bitterness of his spirit, he prayed that he might see the whole scene of prosperity laid waste with fire and sword by the invader.

The story of domestic outrage and disgrace had already been made known to the Countess Frandina. When the hapless Florinda came in presence of her mother, she fell on her neck, and hid her face in her bosom, and wept; but the countess shed never a tear, for she was a woman haughty of spirit and strong of heart. She looked her husband sternly in the face. "Perdition light upon thy head," said she, "if thou submit to this dishonour. For my own part, woman as I am, I will assemble the followers of my house, nor rest until rivers of blood have washed away this stain."

"Be satisfied," replied the count; "vengeance is on foot, and will be sure and ample."

Being now in his own domains, surrounded by his relatives and friends, Count Julian went on to complete his web of treason. In this he was aided by his brother-in-law, Oppas, the bishop of Seville: a dark man and perfidious as the night, but devout in demeanour, and smooth and plausible in council. This artful prelate had contrived to work himself into the entire confidence of the king, and had even prevailed upon him to permit his nephews, Evan and Siseburto, the exiled sons of Witiza, to return into Spain. They resided in Andalusia, and were now looked to as fit instruments in the present traitorous conspiracy.

By the advice of the bishop, Count Julian called a secret meeting of his relatives and adherents on a wild rocky mountain, not far from Consuegra, and which still bears the Moor-

ish appellation of "La Sierra de Calderin," or the mountain of treason.* When all were assembled, Count Julian appeared among them, accompanied by the bishop and by the Countess Frandina. Then gathering around him those who were of his blood and kindred, he revealed the outrage that had been offered to their house. He represented to them that Roderick was their legitimate enemy; that he had dethroned Witiza, their relation, and had now stained the honour of one of the most illustrious daughters of their line. The Countess Frandina seconded his words. She was a woman majestic in person and eloquent of tongue, and being inspired by a mother's feelings, her speech aroused the assembled cavaliers to fury.

The count took advantage of the excitement of the moment to unfold his plan. The main object was to dethrone Don Roderick, and give the crown to the sons of the late King Witiza. By this means they would visit the sins of the tyrant upon his head, and, at the same time, restore the regal honours to their line. For this purpose their own force would be insufficient, but they might procure the aid of Muza ben Nosier, the Arabian general, in Mauritania, who would, no doubt, gladly send a part of his troops into Spain to assist in the enterprise.

The plot thus suggested by Count Julian received the unholy sanction of Bishop Oppas, who engaged to aid it secretly with all his influence and means; for he had great wealth and possessions, and many retainers. The example of the reverend prelate determined all who might otherwise have wavered, and they bound themselves by dreadful oaths to be true to the conspiracy. Count Julian undertook to proceed to Africa, and seek the camp of Muza, to negotiate for his aid, while the bishop was to keep about the person of King Roderick, and lead him into the net prepared for him.

All things being thus arranged, Count Julian gathered together his treasure, and taking his wife and daughter and all his household, abandoned the country he meant to betray; embarking at Malaga for Ceuta. The gate of the wall of that city, through which they went forth, continued for ages to bear the name of *Puerta de la Cava*, or the gate of the harlot; for such was the opprobrious and unmerited appellation bestowed by the Moors on the unhappy Florinda.†

* Bleda, cap. 5.

† Idem., cap. 4.

CHAPTER IX.

SECRET VISIT OF COUNT JULIAN TO THE ARAB CAMP—FIRST
EXPEDITION OF TARIC EL TUERTO.

WHEN Count Julian had placed his family in security in Ceuta, surrounded by soldiery devoted to his fortunes, he took with him a few confidential followers, and departed in secret for the camp of the Arabian Emir, Muza ben Nosier. The camp was spread out in one of those pastoral valleys which lie at the feet of the Barbary hills, with the great range of the Atlas mountains towering in the distance. In the motley army here assembled were warriors of every tribe and nation, that had been united by pact or conquest in the cause of Islam. There were those who had followed Muza from the fertile regions of Egypt, across the deserts of Barca, and those who had joined his standard from among the sun-burnt tribes of Mauritania. These were Saracen and Tartar, Syrian and Copt, and swarthy Moor; sumptuous warriors from the civilized cities of the east, and the gaunt and predatory rovers of the desert. The greater part of the army, however, was composed of Arabs; but differing greatly from the first rude hordes that enlisted under the banner of Mahomet. Almost a century of continual wars with the cultivated nations of the east had rendered them accomplished warriors; and the occasional sojourn in luxurious countries and populous cities, had acquainted them with the arts and habits of civilized life. Still the roving, restless, and predatory habits of the genuine son of Ishmael prevailed, in defiance of every change of clime or situation.

Count Julian found the Arab conqueror Muza surrounded by somewhat of oriental state and splendour. He was advanced in life, but of a noble presence, and concealed his age by tinging his hair and beard with henna. The count assumed an air of soldier-like frankness and decision when he came into his presence. "Hitherto," said he, "we have been enemies; but I come to thee in peace, and it rests with thee to make me the most devoted of thy friends. I have no longer country or king. Roderick the Goth is an usurper, and my deadly foe; he has wounded my honour in the tenderest point, and my country affords me no redress. Aid me in my vengeance, and I will

deliver all Spain into thy hands; a land far exceeding in fertility and wealth all the vaunted regions thou hast conquered in Tingitania."

The heart of Muza leaped with joy at these words, for he was a bold and ambitious conqueror, and, having overrun all western Africa, had often cast a wistful eye to the mountains of Spain, as he beheld them brightening beyond the waters of the strait. Still he possessed the caution of a veteran, and feared to engage in an enterprise of such moment, and to carry his arms into another division of the globe, without the approbation of his sovereign. Having drawn from Count Julian the particulars of his plan, and of the means he possessed to carry it into effect, he laid them before his confidential counsellors and officers, and demanded their opinion. "These words of Count Julian," said he, "may be false and deceitful; or he may not possess the power to fulfil his promises. The whole may be a pretended treason to draw us on to our destruction. It is more natural that he should be treacherous to us than to his country."

Among the generals of Muza, was a gaunt swarthy veteran, scarred with wounds; a very Arab, whose great delight was roving and desperate enterprise, and who cared for nothing beyond his steed, his lance, and scimitar. He was a native of Damascus; his name was Taric ben Zeyad, but, from having lost an eye, he was known among the Spaniards by the appellation of Taric el Tuerto, or Taric, the one-eyed.

The hot blood of this veteran Ishmaelite was in a ferment when he heard of a new country to invade, and vast regions to subdue, and he dreaded lest the cautious hesitation of Muza should permit the glorious prize to escape them. "You speak doubtingly," said he, "of the words of this Christian cavalier, but their truth is easily to be ascertained. Give me four galleys and a handful of men, and I will depart with this Count Julian, skirt the Christian coast, and bring thee back tidings of the land, and of his means to put it in our power."

The words of the veteran pleased Muza ben Nosier, and he gave his consent; and Taric departed with four galleys and five hundred men, guided by the traitor Julian.* This first expedition of the Arabs against Spain took place, according to certain historians, in the year of our Lord seven hundred and

* Beuter, *Cron. Gen. de España*, L. 1, c. 28. *Marmol. Descrip. de Africa*, L. 2, c. 10.

twelve; though others differ on this point, as indeed they do upon almost every point in this early period of Spanish history. The date to which the judicious chroniclers incline, is that of seven hundred and ten, in the month of July. It would appear from some authorities, also, that the galleys of Taric cruised along the coasts of Andalusia and Lusitania, under the feigned character of merchant barks, nor is this at all improbable, while they were seeking merely to observe the land, and get a knowledge of the harbours. Wherever they touched, Count Julian despatched emissaries to assemble his friends and adherents at an appointed place. They gathered together secretly at Gezira Alhadra, that is to say, the Green Island, where they held a conference with Count Julian in presence of Taric ben Zeyad.* Here they again avowed their readiness to flock to his standard whenever it should be openly raised, and made known their various preparations for a rebellion. Taric was convinced, by all that he had seen and heard, that Count Julian had not deceived them, either as to his disposition or his means to betray his country. Indulging his Arab inclinations, he made an inroad into the land, collected great spoil and many captives, and bore off his plunder in triumph to Muza, as a specimen of the riches to be gained by the conquest of the Christian land.†

CHAPTER X.

LETTER OF MUZA TO THE CALIPH—SECOND EXPEDITION OF TARIO EL TUERTO.

ON hearing the tidings brought by Taric el Tuerto, and beholding the spoil he had collected, Muza wrote a letter to the Caliph Waled Almanzor, setting forth the traitorous proffer of Count Julian, and the probability, through his means, of making a successful invasion of Spain. "A new land," said he, "spreads itself out before our delighted eyes, and invites our conquest. A land, too, that equals Syria in the fertility of its soil, and the serenity of its sky; Yemen, or Arabia the happy, in its delightful temperature; India in its flowers and spices; Hegiaz in its fruits and flowers; Cathay in its precious minerals, and Aden in the excellence of its ports and harbours. It

* Bleda, Cron. c. 5.

† Conde, Hist. Dom Arab. part 1, c. 8.

is populous also, and wealthy; having many splendid cities and majestic monuments of ancient art. What is to prevent this glorious land from becoming the inheritance of the faithful? Already we have overcome the tribes of Berbery, of Zab, of Derar, of Zaara, Mazamuda and Sus, and the victorious standard of Islam floats on the towers of Tangier. But four leagues of sea separate us from the opposite coast. One word from my sovereign, and the conquerors of Africa will pour their legions into Andalusia, rescue it from the domination of the unbeliever, and subdue it to the law of the Koran."*

The caliph was overjoyed with the contents of the letter. "God is great!" exclaimed he, "and Mahomet is his prophet! It has been foretold by the ambassador of God that his law should extend to the ultimate parts of the west, and be carried by the sword into new and unknown regions. Behold another land is opened for the triumphs of the faithful. It is the will of Allah, and be his sovereign will obeyed." So the caliph sent missives to Muza, authorizing him to undertake the conquest.

Upon this there was a great stir of preparation, and numerous vessels were assembled and equipped at Tangier to convey the invading army across the straits. Twelve thousand men were chosen for this expedition: most of them light Arabian troops, seasoned in warfare, and fitted for hardy and rapid enterprise. Among them were many horsemen, mounted on fleet Arabian steeds. The whole was put under the command of the veteran Taric el Tuerto, or the one-eyed, in whom Muza reposed implicit confidence as in a second self. Taric accepted the command with joy; his martial fire was roused at the idea of having such an army under his sole command, and such a country to overrun, and he secretly determined never to return unless victorious.

He chose a dark night to convey his troops across the straits of Hercules, and by break of day they began to disembark at Tarifa before the country had time to take the alarm. A few christians hastily assembled from the neighbourhood and opposed their landing, but were easily put to flight. Taric stood on the sea-side, and watched until the last squadron had landed, and all the horses, armour, and munitions of war, were brought on shore; he then gave orders to set fire to the ships. The Moslems were struck with terror when they be-

* Conde, part 1, c. 8.

held their fleet wrapped in flames and smoke, and sinking beneath the waves. "How shall we escape," exclaimed they, "if the fortune of war should be against us?" "There is no escape for the coward!" cried Taric, "the brave man thinks of none; your only chance is victory." "But how without ships shall we ever return to our homes?" "Your home," replied Taric, "is before you; but you must win it with your swords."

While Taric was yet talking with his followers, says one of the ancient chroniclers, a Christian female was descried waving a white pennon on a reed, in signal of peace. On being brought into the presence of Taric, she prostrated herself before him. "Señor," said she, "I am an ancient woman; and it is now full sixty years past and gone since, as I was keeping vigils one winter's night by the fireside, I heard my father, who was an exceeding old man, read a prophecy said to have been written by a holy friar; and this was the purport of the prophecy, that a time would arrive when our country would be invaded and conquered by a people from Africa of a strange garb, a strange tongue, and a strange religion. They were to be led by a strong and valiant captain, who would be known by these signs: on his right shoulder he would have a hairy mole, and his right arm would be much longer than the left, and of such length as to enable him to cover his knee with his hand without bending his body."

Taric listened to the old beldame with grave attention, and when she had concluded, he laid bare his shoulder, and lo! there was the mole as it had been described; his right arm, also, was in verity found to exceed the other in length, though not to the degree that had been mentioned. Upon this the Arab host shouted for joy, and felt assured of conquest.

The discreet Antonio Agapida, though he records this circumstance as it is set down in ancient chronicle, yet withholds his belief from the pretended prophecy, considering the whole a cunning device of Taric to increase the courage of his troops. "Doubtless," says he, "there was a collusion between this ancient sibyl and the crafty son of Ishmael; for these infidel leaders were full of damnable inventions to work upon the superstitious fancies of their followers, and to inspire them with a blind confidence in the success of their arms."

Be this as it may, the veteran Taric took advantage of the excitement of his soldiery, and led them forward to gain possession of a strong-hold, which was, in a manner, the key to all the adjacent country. This was a lofty mountain or pro-

montory almost surrounded by the sea, and connected with the main land by a narrow isthmus. It was called the rock of Calpe, and, like the opposite rock of Ceuta, commanded the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. Here in old times, Hercules had set up one of his pillars, and the city of Heraclea had been built.

As Taric advanced against this promontory, he was opposed by a hasty levy of the Christians, who had assembled under the banner of a Gothic noble of great power and importance, whose domains lay along the mountainous coast of the Mediterranean. The name of this Christian cavalier was Theodomir, but he has universally been called Tadmīr by the Arabian historians, and is renowned as being the first commander that made any stand against the inroad of the Moslems. He was about forty years of age; hardy, prompt, and sagacious; and had all the Gothic nobles been equally vigilant and shrewd in their defence, the banner of Islam would never have triumphed over the land.

Theodomir had but seventeen hundred men under his command, and these but rudely armed; yet he made a resolute stand against the army of Taric, and defended the pass to the promontory with great valour. He was at length obliged to retreat, and Taric advanced and planted his standard on the rock of Calpe, and fortified it as his strong-hold, and as the means of securing an entrance into the land. To commemorate his first victory, he changed the name of the promontory, and called it Gībel Taric, or the Mountain of Tarib, but in process of time the name has gradually been altered to Gibraltar.

In the meantime, the patriotic chieftain Theodomir, having collected his routed forces, encamped with them on the skirts of the mountains, and summoned the country round to join his standard. He sent off missives in all speed to the king, imparting in brief and blunt terms the news of the invasion, and craving assistance with equal frankness. "Señor," said he, in his letter, "the legions of Africa are upon us, but whether they come from heaven or earth I know not. They seem to have fallen from the clouds, for they have no ships. We have been taken by surprise, overpowered by numbers, and obliged to retreat; and they have fortified themselves in our territory. Send us aid, señor, with instant speed, or rather, come yourself to our assistance."*

* Conde, part 1, c. 9.

CHAPTER XI.

MEASURES OF DON RODERICK ON HEARING OF THE INVASION—
EXPEDITION OF ATAULPHO—VISION OF TARIC.

WHEN Don Roderick heard that legions of turbaned troops had poured into the land from Africa, he called to mind the visions and predictions of the necromantic tower, and great fear came upon him. But, though sunk from his former hardihood and virtue, though enervated by indulgence, and degraded in spirit by a consciousness of crime, he was resolute of soul, and roused himself to meet the coming danger. He summoned a hasty levy of horse and foot, amounting to forty thousand; but now were felt the effects of the crafty counsel of Count Julian, for the best of the horses and armour intended for the public service, had been sent into Africa, and were really in possession of the traitors. Many nobles, it is true, took the field with the sumptuous array with which they had been accustomed to appear at tournaments and jousts, but most of their vassals were destitute of weapons, and cased in cuirasses of leather, or suits of armour almost consumed by rust. They were without discipline or animation; and their horses, like themselves, pampered by slothful peace, were little fitted to bear the heat, the dust, and toil of long campaigns.

This army Don Roderick put under the command of his kinsman Ataulpho, a prince of the royal blood of the Goths, and of a noble and generous nature; and he ordered him to march with all speed to meet the foe, and to recruit his forces on the way with the troops of Theodomir.

In the meantime, Taric el Tuerto had received large reinforcements from Africa, and the adherents of Count Julian, and all those discontented with the sway of Don Roderick, had flocked to his standard; for many were deceived by the representations of Count Julian, and thought that the Arabs had come to aid him in placing the sons of Witiza upon the throne. Guided by the count, the troops of Taric penetrated into various parts of the country, and laid waste the land; bringing back loads of spoil to their strong-hold at the rock of Calpe.

The Prince Ataulpho marched with his army through Andalusia, and was joined by Theodomir with his troops; he met with various detachments of the enemy foraging the country, and had several bloody skirmishes; but he succeeded in driv-

ing them before him, and they retreated to the rock of Calpe, where Taric lay gathered up with the main body of his army.

The prince encamped not far from the bay which spreads itself out before the promontory. In the evening he despatched the veteran Theodomir, with a trumpet, to demand a parley of the Arab chieftain, who received the envoy in his tent, surrounded by his captains. Theodomir was frank and abrupt in speech, for the most of his life had been passed far from courts. He delivered, in round terms, the message of the Prince Ataulpho; upbraiding the Arab general with his wanton invasion of the land, and summoning him to surrender his army or to expect no mercy.

The single eye of Taric el Tuerto glowed like a coal of fire at this message. "Tell your commander," replied he, "that I have crossed the strait to conquer Spain, nor will I return until I have accomplished my purpose. Tell him I have men skilled in war, and armed in proof, with whose aid I trust soon to give a good account of his rabble host."

A murmur of applause passed through the assemblage of Moslem captains. Theodomir glanced on them a look of defiance, but his eye rested on a renegado Christian, one of his own ancient comrades, and a relation of Count Julian. "As to you, Don Graybeard," said he, "you who turn apostate in your declining age, I here pronounce you a traitor to your God, your king, and country; and stand ready to prove it this instant upon your body, if field be granted me."

The traitor knight was stung with rage at these words, for truth rendered them piercing to the heart. He would have immediately answered to the challenge, but Taric forbade it, and ordered that the Christian envoy should be conducted from the camp. "'Tis well," replied Theodomir; "God will give me the field which you deny. Let yon hoary apostate look to himself to-morrow in the battle, for I pledge myself to use my lance upon no other foe until it has shed his blood upon the native soil he has betrayed." So saying, he left the camp, nor could the Moslem chieftains help admiring the honest indignation of this patriot knight, while they secretly despised his renegado adversary.

The ancient Moorish chroniclers relate many awful portents, and strange and mysterious visions, which appeared to the commanders of either army during this anxious night. Certainly it was a night of fearful suspense, and Moslem and Christian looked forward with doubt to the fortune of the coming

day. The Spanish sentinel walked his pensive round, listening occasionally to the vague sounds from the distant rock of Calpe, and eyeing it as the mariner eyes the thunder-cloud, pregnant with terror and destruction. The Arabs, too, from their lofty cliffs beheld the numerous camp-fires of the Christians gradually lighted up, and saw that they were a powerful host; at the same time the night breeze brought to their ears the sullen roar of the sea which separated them from Africa. When they considered their perilous situation, an army on one side, with a whole nation aroused to reinforce it, and on the other an impassable sea, the spirits of many of the warriors were cast down, and they repented the day when they had ventured into this hostile land.

Taric marked their despondency, but said nothing. Scarce had the first streak of morning light trembled along the sea, however, when he summoned his principal warriors to his tent. "Be of good cheer," said he; "Allah is with us, and has sent his Prophet to give assurance of his aid. Scarce had I retired to my tent last night, when a man of a majestic and venerable presence stood before me. He was taller by a palm than the ordinary race of men, his flowing beard was of a golden hue, and his eyes were so bright that they seemed to send forth flashes of fire. I have heard the Emir Bahamet, and other ancient men, describe the Prophet, whom they had seen many times while on earth, and such was his form and lineament. 'Fear nothing, O Taric, from the morrow,' said he; 'I will be with thee in the fight. Strike boldly, then, and conquer. Those of thy followers who survive the battle will have this land for an inheritance; for those who fall, a mansion in paradise is prepared, and immortal houris await their coming.' He spake and vanished; I heard a strain of celestial melody, and my tent was filled with the odours of Arabia the happy." "Such," say the Spanish chroniclers, "was another of the arts by which this arch son of Ishmael sought to animate the hearts of his followers; and the pretended vision has been recorded by the Arabian writers as a veritable occurrence. Marvellous, indeed, was the effect produced by it upon the infidel soldiery, who now cried out with eagerness to be led against the foe."

CHAPTER XII.

BATTLE OF CALPE—FATE OF ATAULPHO.

THE gray summits of the rock of Calpe brightened with the first rays of morning, as the Christian army issued forth from its encampment. The Prince Ataulpho rode from squadron to squadron, animating his soldiers for the battle. "Never should we sheath our swords," said he, "while these infidels have a footing in the land. They are pent up within yon rocky mountain; we must assail them in their rugged hold. We have a long day before us; let not the setting sun shine upon one of their host who is not a fugitive, a captive, or a corpse."

The words of the prince were received with shouts, and the army moved towards the promontory. As they advanced, they heard the clash of cymbals and the bray of trumpets, and the rocky bosom of the mountain glittered with helms and spears and scimitars; for the Arabs, inspired with fresh confidence by the words of Taric, were sallying forth, with flaunting banners, to the combat.

The gaunt Arab chieftain stood upon a rock as his troops marched by; his buckler was at his back, and he brandished in his hand a double-pointed spear. Calling upon the several leaders by their names, he exhorted them to direct their attacks against the Christian captains, and especially against Ataulpho; "for the chiefs being slain," said he, "their followers will vanish from before us like the morning mist."

The Gothic nobles were easily to be distinguished by the splendour of their arms, but the Prince Ataulpho was conspicuous above all the rest for the youthful grace and majesty of his appearance, and the bravery of his array. He was mounted on a superb Andalusian charger, richly caparisoned with crimson velvet, embroidered with gold. His surcoat was of like colour and adornment, and the plumes that waved above his burnished helmet were of the purest white. Ten mounted pages, magnificently attired, followed him to the field, but their duty was not so much to fight as to attend upon their lord, and to furnish him with steed or weapon.

The Christian troops, though irregular and undisciplined, were full of native courage; for the old warrior spirit of their Gothic sires still glowed in their bosoms. There were two battalions of infantry, but Ataulpho stationed them in the rear;

"for God forbid," said he, "that foot-soldiers should have the place of honour in the battle, when I have so many valiant cavaliers." As the armies drew nigh to each other, however, it was discovered that the advance of the Arabs was composed of infantry. Upon this the cavaliers checked their steeds, and requested that the foot-soldiery might advance and disperse this losel crew, holding it beneath their dignity to contend with pedestrian foes. The prince, however, commanded them to charge; upon which, putting spurs to their steeds, they rushed upon the foe.

The Arabs stood the shock manfully, receiving the horses upon the points of their lances; many of the riders were shot down with bolts from cross-bows, or stabbed with the poniards of the Moslems. The cavaliers succeeded, however, in breaking into the midst of the battalion and throwing it into confusion, cutting down some with their swords, transpiercing others with their spears, and trampling many under the hoofs of their horses. At this moment, they were attacked by a band of Spanish horsemen, the recreant partisans of Count Julian. Their assault bore hard upon their countrymen, who were disordered by the contest with the foot-soldiers, and many a loyal Christian knight fell beneath the sword of an unnatural foe.

The foremost among these recreant warriors was the renegado cavalier whom Theodomir had challenged in the tent of Taric. He dealt his blows about him with a powerful arm and with malignant fury, for nothing is more deadly than the hatred of an apostate. In the midst of his career he was espied by the hardy Theodomir, who came spurring to the encounter. "Traitor," cried he, "I have kept my vow. This lance has been held sacred from all other foes to make a passage for thy perjured soul." The renegado had been renowned for prowess before he became a traitor to his country, but guilt will sap the courage of the stoutest heart. When he beheld Theodomir rushing upon him, he would have turned and fled; pride alone withheld him; and, though an admirable master of defence, he lost all skill to ward the attack of his adversary. At the first assault the lance of Theodomir pierced him through and through; he fell to the earth, gnashed his teeth as he rolled in the dust, but yielded his breath without uttering a word.

The battle now became general, and lasted throughout the morning with varying success. The stratagem of Taric, however, began to produce its effect. The Christian leaders and

most conspicuous cavaliers were singled out and severally assailed by overpowering numbers. They fought desperately, and performed miracles of prowess, but fell, one by one, beneath a thousand wounds. Still the battle lingered on throughout a great part of the day, and as the declining sun shone through the clouds of dust, it seemed as if the conflicting hosts were wrapped in smoke and fire.

The Prince Ataulpho saw that the fortune of battle was against him. He rode about the field calling out the names of the bravest of his knights, but few answered to his call; the rest lay mangled on the field. With this handful of warriors he endeavoured to retrieve the day, when he was assailed by Tenderos, a partisan of Count Julian, at the head of a body of recreant Christians. At sight of this new adversary, fire flashed from the eyes of the prince, for Tenderos had been brought up in his father's palace. "Well dost thou, traitor!" cried he, "to attack the son of thy lord, who gave thee bread; thou, who hast betrayed thy country and thy God!"

So saying, he seized a lance from one of his pages, and charged furiously upon the apostate; but Tenderos met him in mid career, and the lance of the prince was shivered upon his shield. Ataulpho then grasped his mace, which hung at his saddle-bow, and a doubtful fight ensued. Tenderos was powerful of fame and superior in the use of his weapons, but the curse of treason seemed to paralyse his arm. He wounded Ataulpho slightly between the greaves of his armour, but the prince dealt a blow with his mace that crushed through helm and skull and reached the brains; and Tenderos fell dead to earth, his armour rattling as he fell.

At the same moment, a javelin hurled by an Arab transpierced the horse of Ataulpho, which sunk beneath him. The prince seized the reins of the steed of Tenderos, but the faithful animal, as though he knew him to be the foe of his late lord, reared and plunged and refused to let him mount. The prince, however, used him as a shield to ward off the press of foes, while with his sword he defended himself against those in front of him. Taric ben Zeyad arrived at the scene of conflict, and paused for a moment in admiration of the surpassing prowess of the prince; recollecting, however, that his fall would be a death-blow to his army, he spurred upon him, and wounded him severely with his scimitar. Before he could repeat his blow, Theodomir led up a body of Christian cavaliers to the rescue, and Taric was parted from his prey by

the tumult of the fight. The prince sank to the earth, covered with wounds and exhausted by the loss of blood. A faithful page drew him from under the hoofs of the horses, and, aided by a veteran soldier, an ancient vassal of Ataulpho, conveyed him to a short distance from the scene of battle, by the side of a small stream that gushed out from among rocks. They stanchd the blood that flowed from his wounds, and washed the dust from his face, and laid him beside the fountain. The page sat at his head, and supported it on his knees, and the veteran stood at his feet, with his brow bent and his eyes full of sorrow. The prince gradually revived, and opened his eyes. "How fares the battle?" said he. "The struggle is hard," replied the soldier, "but the day may yet be ours."

The prince felt that the hour of his death was at hand, and ordered that they should aid him to rise upon his knees. They supported him between them, and he prayed fervently for a short time, when, finding his strength declining, he beckoned the veteran to sit down beside him on the rock. Continuing to kneel, he confessed himself to that ancient soldier, having no priest or friar to perform that office in this hour of extremity. When he had so done, he sunk again upon the earth and pressed it with his lips, as if he would take a fond farewell of his beloved country. The page would then have raised his head, but found that his lord had yielded up the ghost.

A number of Arab warriors, who came to the fountain to slake their thirst, cut off the head of the prince and bore it in triumph to Taric, crying, "Behold the head of the Christian leader." Taric immediately ordered that the head should be put upon the end of a lance, together with the surcoat of the prince, and borne about the field of battle, with the sound of trumpets, atabals, and cymbals.

When the Christians beheld the surcoat, and knew the features of the prince, they were struck with horror, and heart and hand failed them. Theodomir endeavoured in vain to rally them; they threw by their weapons and fled; and they continued to fly, and the enemy to pursue and slay them, until the darkness of the night. The Moslems then returned and plundered the Christian camp, where they found abundant spoil.

CHAPTER XIII.

TERROR OF THE COUNTRY—RODÉRICK ROUSES HIMSELF TO ARMS.

THE scattered fugitives of the Christian army spread terror throughout the land. The inhabitants of the towns and villages gathered around them as they applied at their gates for food, or laid themselves down faint and wounded beside the public fountains. When they related the tale of their defeat, old men shook their heads and groaned, and the women uttered cries and lamentations. So strange and unlooked-for a calamity filled them with consternation and despair; for it was long since the alarm of war had sounded in their land, and this was a warfare that carried chains and slavery, and all kinds of horrors in its train.

Don Roderick was seated with his beauteous queen, Exilona, in the royal palace which crowned the rocky summit of Toledo, when the bearer of ill-tidings came galloping over the bridge of the Tagus. "What tidings from the army?" demanded the king, as the panting messenger was brought into his presence. "Tidings of great woe," exclaimed the soldier. "The prince has fallen in battle. I saw his head and surcoat upon a Moorish lance, and the army was overthrown and fled."

At hearing these words, Roderick covered his face with his hands, and for some time sat in silence; and all his courtiers stood mute and aghast, and no one dared to speak a word. In that awful space of time passed before his thoughts all his errors and his crimes, and all the evils that had been predicted in the necromantic tower. His mind was filled with horror and confusion, for the hour of his destruction seemed at hand; but he subdued his agitation by his strong and haughty spirit; and when he uncovered his face no one could read on his brow the trouble and agony of his heart. Still every hour brought fresh tidings of disaster. Messenger after messenger came spurring into the city, distracting it with new alarms. The infidels, they said, were strengthening themselves in the land: host after host were pouring in from Africa: the seaboard of Andalusia glittered with spears and scimitars. Bands of turbaned horsemen had overrun the plains of Sidonia, even to the banks of the Guadiana. Fields were laid waste, towns and cities plundered, the inhabitants carried into captivity, and the whole country lay in smoking desolation.

Roderick heard all these tidings with an undaunted aspect, nor did he ever again betray sign of consternation; but the anxiety of his soul was evident in his warlike preparations. He issued orders that every noble and prelate of his kingdom should put himself at the head of his retainers and take the field, and that every man capable of bearing arms should hasten to his standard, bringing whatever horse and mule and weapon he possessed; and he appointed the plain of Cordova for the place where the army was to assemble. Throwing by, then, all the trappings of his late slothful and voluptuous life, and arming himself for warlike action, he departed from Toledo at the head of his guard, composed of the flower of the youthful nobility. His queen, Exilona, accompanied him, for she craved permission to remain in one of the cities of Andalusia, that she might be near her lord in this time of peril.

Among the first who appeared to hail the arrival of the king at Cordova, was the Bishop Oppas, the secret partisan of the traitor Julian. He brought with him his two nephews, Evan and Siseburto, the sons of the late king Witiza, and a great host of vassals and retainers, all well armed and appointed; for they had been furnished by Count Julian with a part of the arms sent by the king to Africa. The bishop was smooth of tongue, and profound in his hypocrisy; his pretended zeal and devotion, and the horror with which he spoke of the treachery of his kinsman, imposed upon the credulous spirit of the king, and he was readily admitted into his most secret councils.

The alarm of the infidel invasion had spread throughout the land, and roused the Gothic valour of the inhabitants. On receiving the orders of Roderick, every town and hamlet, every mountain and valley, had sent forth its fighting men, and the whole country was on the march towards Andalusia. In a little while there were gathered together, on the plain of Cordova, near fifty thousand horsemen, and a countless host of foot-soldiers. The Gothic nobles appeared in burnished armour, curiously inlaid and adorned, with chains and jewels of gold, and ornaments of precious stones, and silken scarfs, and surcoats of brocade, or velvet richly embroidered; betraying the luxury and ostentation into which they had declined from the iron hardihood of their warlike sires. As to the common people, some had lances and shields and swords and cross-bows, but the greater part were unarmed, or provided merely

with slings, and clubs studded with nails, and with the iron implements of husbandry; and many had made shields for themselves from the doors and windows of their habitations. They were a prodigious host, and appeared, say the Arabian chroniclers, like an agitated sea; but, though brave in spirit, they possessed no knowledge of warlike art, and were ineffectual through lack of arms and discipline.

Several of the most ancient and experienced cavaliers, beholding the state of the army, advised Don Roderick to await the arrival of more regular troops, which were stationed in Iberia, Cantabria, and Gallia Gothica; but this counsel was strenuously opposed by the Bishop Oppas; who urged the king to march immediately against the infidels. "As yet," said he, "their number is but limited, but every day new hosts arrive, like flocks of locusts, from Africa. They will augment faster than we; they are living, too, at our expense, and, while we pause, both armies are consuming the substance of the land."

King Roderick listened to the crafty counsel of the bishop, and determined to advance without delay. He mounted his war horse, Orelia, and rode among his troops assembled on that spacious plain, and wherever he appeared he was received with acclamations; for nothing so arouses the spirit of the soldier as to behold his sovereign in arms. He addressed them in words calculated to touch their hearts and animate their courage. "The Saracens," said he, "are ravaging our land, and their object is our conquest. Should they prevail, your very existence as a nation is at an end. They will overturn your altars; trample on the cross; lay waste your cities; carry off your wives and daughters, and doom yourselves and sons to hard and cruel slavery. No safety remains for you but in the prowess of your arms. For my own part, as I am your king, so will I be your leader, and will be the foremost to encounter every toil and danger."

The soldiery answered their monarch with loud acclamations, and solemnly pledged themselves to fight to the last gasp in defence of their country and their faith. The king then arranged the order of their march: all those who were armed with curiasses and coats of mail were placed in the front and rear; the centre of the army was composed of a promiscuous throng, without body armour, and but scantily provided with weapons.

When they were about to march, the king called to him a noble cavalier named Ramiro, and delivering him the royal

standard, charged him to guard it well for the honour of Spain; scarcely, however, had the good knight received it in his hand, when he fell dead from his horse, and the staff of the standard was broken in twain. Many ancient courtiers who were present, looked upon this as an evil omen, and counselled the king not to set forward on his march that day; but, disregarding all auguries and portents, he ordered the royal banner to be put upon a lance and gave it in charge of another standard bearer: then commanding the trumpets to be sounded, he departed at the head of his host to seek the enemy.

The field where this great army assembled was called, from the solemn pledge given by the nobles and the soldiery, *El campo de la verdad*; or, The Field of Truth; a name, says the sage chronicler Abulcasim, which it bears even to the present day.*

CHAPTER XIV.

MARCH OF THE GOTHIC ARMY—ENCAMPMENT ON THE BANKS OF THE GUADALETE—MYSTERIOUS PREDICTIONS OF A PALMER—CONDUCT OF PELISTES THEREUPON.

THE hopes of Andalusia revived as this mighty host stretched in lengthening lines along its fertile plains; from morn until night it continued to pour along, with sound of drum and trumpet; it was led on by the proudest nobles and bravest cavaliers in the land, and, had it possessed arms and discipline, might have undertaken the conquest of the world.

After a few days' march, Don Roderick arrived in sight of the Moslem army, encamped on the banks of the Guadalete,† where that beautiful stream winds through the fertile land of Xeres. The infidel host was far inferior in number to the Christians, but then it was composed of hardy and dexterous troops, seasoned to war, and admirably armed. The camp shone gloriously in the setting sun, and resounded with the clash of cymbal, the note of the trumpet, and the neighing of fiery Arabian steeds. There were swarthy troops from every

* La Perdida de España, cap. 9. Bleda, L. 2, c. 8.

† This name was given to it subsequently by the Arabs. It signifies the River of Death. Vide Pedraza, Hist. Granad. p. 3, c. 1.

nation of the African coast, together with legions from Syria and Egypt, while the light Bedouins were careering about the adjacent plain. What grieved and incensed the spirits of the Christian warriors, however, was to behold, a little apart from the Moslem host, an encampment of Spanish cavaliers, with the banner of Count Julian waving above their tents. They were ten thousand in number, valiant and hardy men, the most experienced of Spanish soldiery, most of them having served in the African wars; they were well armed and appointed also, with the weapons of which the count had beguiled his sovereign; and it was a grievous sight to behold such good soldiers arrayed against their country and their faith.

The Christians pitched their tents about the hour of vespers, at a short league distant from the enemy, and remained gazing with anxiety and awe upon this barbaric host that had caused such terror and desolation in the land: for the first sight of a hostile encampment in a country disused to war, is terrible to a newly enlisted soldier. A marvellous occurrence is recorded by the Arabian chroniclers as having taken place in the Christian camp; but discreet Spanish writers relate it with much modification, and consider it a stratagem of the wily Bishop Oppas, to sound the loyalty of the Christian cavaliers.

As several leaders of the army were seated with the bishop in his tent, conversing on the dubious fortunes of the approaching contest, an ancient pilgrim appeared at the entrance. He was bowed down with years, his snowy beard descended to his girdle, and he supported his tottering steps with a palmer's staff. The cavaliers rose and received him with great reverence as he advanced within the tent. Holding up his withered hand, "Woe, woe to Spain!" exclaimed he, "for the vial of the wrath of Heaven is about to be poured out. Listen, warriors, and take warning. Four months since, having performed my pilgrimage to the sepulchre of our Lord in Palestine, I was on my return towards my native land. Wearied and way-worn, I lay down one night to sleep beneath a palm tree, by the side of a fountain, when I was awakened by a voice saying unto me, in soft accents, 'Son of sorrow, why sleepest thou?' I opened my eyes, and beheld one of fair and beauteous countenance, in shining apparel, and with glorious wings, standing by the fountain; and I said, 'Who art thou, who callest upon me in this deep hour of the night?'

"'Fear not,' replied the stranger; 'I am an angel from heaven, sent to reveal unto thee the fate of thy country. Be-

hold, the sins of Roderick have come up before God, and His anger is kindled against him, and He has given him up to be invaded and destroyed. Hasten then to Spain, and seek the camp of thy countrymen. Warn them that such only shall be saved as shall abandon Roderick; but those who adhere to him shall share his punishment, and shall fall under the sword of the invader.”

The pilgrim ceased, and passed forth from the tent; certain of the cavaliers followed him to detain him, that they might converse further with him about these matters, but he was nowhere to be found. The sentinel before the tent said, “I saw no one come forth, but it was as if a blast of wind passed by me, and there was a rustling as of dry leaves.”

The cavaliers remained looking upon each other with astonishment. The Bishop Oppas sat with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and shadowed by his overhanging brow. At length, breaking silence, in a low and faltering voice: “Doubtless,” said he, “this message is from God; and since He has taken compassion upon us, and given us notice of His impending judgment, it behoves us to hold grave council, and determine how best we may accomplish His will and avert His displeasure.”

The chiefs still remained silent as men confounded. Among them was a veteran noble named Pelistes. He had distinguished himself in the African wars, fighting side by side with Count Julian; but the latter had never dared to tamper with his faith, for he knew his stern integrity. Pelistes had brought with him to the camp his only son, who had never drawn a sword except in tourney. When the young man saw that the veterans held their peace, the blood mantled in his cheek, and, overcoming his modesty, he broke forth with a generous warmth: “I know not, cavaliers,” said he, “what is passing in your minds, but I believe this pilgrim to be an envoy from the devil; for none else could have given such dastard and perfidious counsel. For my own part, I stand ready to defend my king, my country, and my faith; I know no higher duty than this; and if God thinks fit to strike me dead in the performance of it, His sovereign will be done!”

When the young man had risen to speak, his father had fixed his eyes upon him with a grave and stern demeanour, leaning upon a two-handed sword. As soon as the youth had finished, Pelistes embraced him with a father's fondness. “Thou hast spoken well, my son,” said he; “if I held my peace at the counsel of this losel pilgrim, it was but to hear thy

opinion, and to learn whether thou wert worthy of thy lineage and of the training I had given thee. Hadst thou counselled otherwise than thou hast done, hadst thou shown thyself craven and disloyal; so help me God, I would have struck off thy head with this weapon which I hold in my hand. But thou hast counselled like a loyal and a Christian knight, and I thank God for having given me a son worthy to perpetuate the honours of my line. As to this pilgrim, be he saint or be he devil, I care not; this much I promise, that if I am to die in defence of my country and my king, my life shall be a costly purchase to the foe. Let each man make the same resolve, and I trust we shall yet prove the pilgrim a lying prophet." The words of Pelistes roused the spirits of many of the cavaliers; others, however, remained full of anxious foreboding, and when this fearful prophecy was rumoured about the camp, as it presently was by the emissaries of the bishop, it spread awe and dismay among the soldiery.

CHAPTER XV.

SKIRMISHING OF THE ARMIES—PELISTES AND HIS SON—PELISTES AND THE BISHOP.

ON the following day the two armies remained regarding each other with wary, but menacing aspect. About noontide King Roderick sent forth a chosen force of five hundred horse and two hundred foot, the best armed of his host, to skirmish with the enemy, that, by gaining some partial advantage, they might raise the spirits of the army. They were led on by Theodomir, the same Gothic noble who had signalized himself by first opposing the invasion of the Moslems.

The Christian squadrons paraded with flying pennons in the valley which lay between the armies. The Arabs were not slow in answering their defiance. A large body of horsemen sallied forth to the encounter, together with three hundred of the followers of Count Julian. There was hot skirmishing about the field and on the banks of the river; many gallant feats were displayed on either side, and many valiant warriors were slain. As the night closed in, the trumpets from either camp summoned the troops to retire from the combat. In this day's action the Christians suffered greatly in the loss of their

distinguished cavaliers; for it is the noblest spirits who venture most, and lay themselves open to danger; and the Moslem soldiers had instructions to single out the leaders of the adverse host. All this is said to have been devised by the perfidious Bishop Oppas, who had secret communications with the enemy, while he influenced the councils of the king; and who trusted that by this skirmishing warfare the flower of the Christian troops would be cut off, and the rest disheartened.

On the following morning a larger force was ordered out to skirmish, and such of the soldiery as were unarmed were commanded to stand ready to seize the horses and strip off the armour of the killed and wounded. Among the most illustrious of the warriors who fought that day was Pelistes, the Gothic noble who had so sternly checked the tongue of the Bishop Oppas. He led to the field a large body of his own vassals and retainers, and of cavaliers trained up in his house, who had followed him to the wars in Africa, and who looked up to him more as a father than a chieftain. Beside him was his only son, who now for the first time was fleshing his sword in battle. The conflict that day was more general and bloody than the day preceding; the slaughter of the Christian warriors was immense, from their lack of defensive armour; and as nothing could prevent the flower of the Gothic chivalry from spurring to the combat, the field was strewn with the bodies of the youthful nobles. None suffered more, however, than the warriors of Pelistes. Their leader himself was bold and hardy, and prone to expose himself to danger; but years and experience had moderated his early fire; his son, however, was eager to distinguish himself in this, his first essay, and rushed with impetuous ardour into the hottest of the battle. In vain his father called to caution him; he was ever in the advance, and seemed unconscious of the perils that surrounded him. The cavaliers and vassals of his father followed him with devoted zeal, and many of them paid for their loyalty with their lives. When the trumpets sounded in the evening for retreat, the troops of Pelistes were the last to reach the camp. They came slowly and mournfully, and much decreased in number. Their veteran commander was seated on his war-horse, but the blood trickled from the greaves of his armour. His valiant son was borne on the shields of his vassals; when they laid him on the earth near to where the king was standing, they found that the heroic youth had expired of his wounds. The cavaliers surrounded the body and gave utterance to their

grief, but the father restrained his agony, and looked on with the stern resignation of a soldier.

Don Roderick surveyed the field of battle with a rueful eye, for it was covered with the mangled bodies of his most illustrious warriors; he saw, too, with anxiety, that the common people, unused to war and unsustained by discipline, were harassed by incessant toils and dangers, and were cooling in their zeal and courage.

The crafty Bishop Oppas marked the internal trouble of the king, and thought a favourable moment had arrived to sway him to his purpose. He called to his mind the various portents and prophecies which had forerun their present danger. "Let not my lord the king," said he, "make light of these mysterious revelations, which appear to be so disastrously fulfilling. The hand of Heaven appears to be against us. Destruction is impending over our heads. Our troops are rude and unskilful, but slightly armed, and much cast down in spirit. Better is it that we should make a treaty with the enemy, and, by granting part of his demands, prevent the utter ruin of our country. If such counsel be acceptable to my lord the king, I stand ready to depart upon an embassy to the Moslem camp."

Upon hearing these words, Pelistes, who had stood in mournful silence, regarding the dead body of his son, burst forth with honest indignation. "By this good sword," said he, "the man who yields such dastard counsel deserves death from the hand of his countryman rather than from the foe; and, were it not for the presence of the king, may I forfeit salvation if I would not strike him dead upon the spot."

The bishop turned an eye of venom upon Pelistes. "My lord," said he, "I, too, bear a weapon, and know how to wield it. Were the king not present, you would not dare to menace, nor should you advance one step without my hastening to meet you."

The king interposed between the jarring nobles, and rebuked the impetuosity of Pelistes, but at the same time rejected the counsel of the bishop. "The event of this conflict," said he, "is in the hand of God; but never shall my sword return to its scabbard while an infidel invader remains within the land."

He then held a council with his captains, and it was determined to offer the enemy general battle on the following day. A herald was despatched defying Taric ben Zeyad to the contest, and the defiance was gladly accepted by the

Moslem chieftain.* Don Roderick then formed the plan of action, and assigned to each commander his several station, after which he dismissed his officers, and each one sought his tent, to prepare by diligence or repose for the next day's eventful contest.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRAITOROUS MESSAGE OF COUNT JULIAN.

TARIC BEN ZEYAD had been surprised by the valour of the Christian cavaliers in the recent battles, and at the number and apparent devotion of the troops which accompanied the king to the field. The confident defiance of Don Roderick increased his surprise. When the herald had retired, he turned an eye of suspicion on Count Julian. "Thou hast represented thy countrymen," said he, "as sunk in effeminacy and lost to all generous impulse; yet I find them fighting with the courage and the strength of lions. Thou hast represented thy king as detested by his subjects and surrounded by secret treason; but I behold his tents whitening the hills and dales, while thousands are hourly flocking to his standard. Woe unto thee if thou hast dealt deceitfully with us, or betrayed us with guileful words."

Don Julian retired to his tent in great trouble of mind, and fear came upon him that the Bishop Oppas might play him false; for it is the lot of traitors ever to distrust each other. He called to him the same page who had brought him the letter from Florinda, revealing the story of her dishonour.

"Thou knowest, my trusty page," said he, "that I have reared thee in my household, and cherished thee above all thy companions. If thou hast loyalty and affection for thy lord, now is the time to serve him. Hie thee to the Christian camp, and find thy way to the tent of the Bishop Oppas. If any one ask thee who thou art, tell them thou art of the household of the bishop, and bearer of missives from Cordova. When thou art admitted to the presence of the bishop, show him this ring, and he will commune with thee in secret. Then tell him Count Julian greets him as a brother, and demands how the wrongs of his daughter Florinda are to be redressed.

* Bleda, Cronica.

Mark well his reply, and bring it word for word. Have thy lips closed, but thine eyes and ears open; and observe every thing of note in the camp of the king. So, speed thee on thy errand—away, away!”

The page hastened to saddle a Barbary steed, fleet as the wind, and of a jet black colour, so as not to be easily discernible in the night. He girded on a sword and a dagger, slung an Arab bow with a quiver of arrows at his side, and buckler at his shoulder. Issuing out of the camp, he sought the banks of the Guadalete, and proceeded silently along its stream, which reflected the distant fires of the Christian camp. As he passed by the place which had been the scene of the recent conflict, he heard, from time to time, the groan of some expiring warrior who had crawled among the reeds on the margin of the river; and sometimes his steed stepped cautiously over the mangled bodies of the slain. The young page was unused to the sights of war, and his heart beat quick within him. He was hailed by the sentinels as he approached the Christian camp, and, on giving the reply taught him by Count Julian, was conducted to the tent of the Bishop Oppas.

The bishop had not yet retired to his couch. When he beheld the ring of Count Julian, and heard the words of his message, he saw that the page was one in whom he might confide. “Hasten back to thy lord,” said he, “and tell him to have faith in me and all shall go well. As yet I have kept my troops out of the combat. They are all fresh, well armed, and well appointed. The king has confided to myself, aided by the princes Evan and Siseburto, the command of a wing of the army. To-morrow, at the hour of noon, when both armies are in the heat of action, we will pass over with our forces to the Moslems. But I claim the compact made with Taric ben Zeyad, that my nephews be placed in dominion over Spain, and tributary only to the Caliph of Damascus.” With this traitorous message the page departed. He led his black steed by the bridle, to present less mark for observation, as he went stumbling along near the expiring fires of the camp. On passing the last outpost, where the guards were half slumbering on their arms, he was overheard and summoned, but leaped lightly into the saddle and put spurs to his steed. An arrow whistled by his ear, and two more stuck in the target which he had thrown upon his back. The clatter of swift hoofs echoed behind him, but he had learnt of the Arabs to fight and fly. Plucking a shaft from his quiver, and turning and

rising in his stirrups as his courser galloped at full speed, he drew the arrow to the head and launched it at his pursuer. The twang of the bow-string was followed by the crash of armour, and a deep groan, as the horseman tumbled to the earth. The page pursued his course without further molestation, and arrived at the Moslem camp before the break of day.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAST DAY OF THE BATTLE.

A LIGHT had burned throughout the night in the tent of the king, and anxious thoughts and dismal visions troubled his repose. If he fell into a slumber, he beheld in his dreams the shadowy phantoms of the necromantic tower, or the injured Florinda, pale and dishevelled, imprecating the vengeance of heaven upon his head. In the mid-watches of the night, when all was silent except the footsteps of the sentinel, pacing before his tent, the king rose from his couch, and walking forth looked thoughtfully upon the martial scene before him. The pale crescent of the moon hung over the Moorish camp, and dimly lighted up the windings of the Guadalete. The heart of the king was heavy and oppressed; but he felt only for himself, says Antonio Agapida: he thought nothing of the perils impending over the thousands of devoted subjects in the camp below him; sleeping, as it were, on the margin of their graves. The faint clatter of distant hoofs, as if in rapid flight, reached the monarch's ear, but the horsemen were not to be descried. At that very hour, and along the shadowy banks of that river, here and there gleaming with the scanty moonlight, passed the fugitive messenger of Count Julian, with the plan of the next day's treason.

The day had not yet dawned, when the sleepless and impatient monarch summoned his attendants and arrayed himself for the field. He then sent for the venerable Bishop Urbino, who had accompanied him to the camp, and, laying aside his regal crown, he knelt with head uncovered, and confessed his sins before the holy man. After this a solemn mass was performed in the royal tent, and the eucharist administered to the monarch. When these ceremonies were concluded, he besought the archbishop to depart forthwith for

Cordova, there to await the issue of the battle, and to be ready to bring forward reinforcements and supplies. The archbishop saddled his mule and departed just as the faint blush of morning began to kindle in the east. Already the camp resounded with the thrilling call of the trumpet, the clank of armour, and the tramp and neigh of steeds. As the archbishop passed through the camp, he looked with a compassionate heart on this vast multitude, of whom so many were soon to perish. The warriors pressed to kiss his hand, and many a cavalier full of youth and fire received his benediction, who was to lie stiff and cold before the evening.

When the troops were marshalled for the field, Don Roderick prepared to sally forth in the state and pomp with which the Gothic kings were wont to go to battle. He was arrayed in robes of gold brocade; his sandals were embroidered with pearls and diamonds; he had a sceptre in his hand, and he wore a regal crown resplendent with inestimable jewels. Thus gorgeously apparelled, he ascended a lofty chariot of ivory, the axle-trees of which were of silver, and the wheels and pole covered with plates of burnished gold. Above his head was a canopy of cloth of gold embossed with armorial devices, and studded with precious stones.* This sumptuous chariot was drawn by milk-white horses, with caparisons of crimson velvet, embroidered with pearls. A thousand youthful cavaliers surrounded the car; all of the noblest blood and bravest spirit; all knighted by the king's own hand, and sworn to defend him to the last.

When Roderick issued forth in this resplendent state, says an Arabian writer, surrounded by his guards in gilded armour and waving plumes and scarfs and surcoats of a thousand dyes, it was as if the sun were emerging in the dazzling chariot of the day from amidst the glorious clouds of morning.

As the royal car rolled along in front of the squadrons, the soldiers shouted with admiration. Don Roderick waved his sceptre and addressed them from his lofty throne, reminding them of the horror and desolation which had already been spread through the land by the invaders. He called upon them to summon up the ancient valour of their race and avenge the blood of their brethren. "One day of glorious fighting," said he, "and this infidel horde will be driven into the sea or will perish beneath your swords. Forward bravely

* Entrand. Chron. an. Chris. 714.

to the fight; your families are behind you praying for your success; the invaders of your country are before you; God is above to bless his Holy cause, and your king leads you to the field." The army shouted with one accord, "Forward to the foe, and death be his portion who shuns the encounter!"

The rising sun began to shine along the glistening waters of the Guadalete as the Moorish army, squadron after squadron, came sweeping down a gentle declivity to the sound of martial music. Their turbans and robes, of various dyes and fashions, gave a splendid appearance to their host; as they marched, a cloud of dust arose and partly hid them from the sight, but still there would break forth flashes of steel and gleams of burnished gold, like rays of vivid lightning; while the sound of drum and trumpet, and the clash of Moorish cymbal, were as the warlike thunder within that stormy cloud of battle.

As the armies drew near each other, the sun disappeared among gathering clouds, and the gloom of the day was increased by the columns of dust which rose from either host. At length the trumpets sounded for the encounter. The battle commenced with showers of arrows, stones, and javelins. The Christian foot-soldiers fought to disadvantage, the greater part being destitute of helm or buckler. A battalion of light Arabian horsemen, led by a Greek renegado named Maguel el Rumi, careered in front of the Christian line, launching their darts, and then wheeling off beyond the reach of the missiles hurled after them. Theodomir now brought up his seasoned troops into the action, seconded by the veteran Pelistes, and in a little while the battle became furious and promiscuous. It was glorious to behold the old Gothic valour shining forth in this hour of fearful trial. Wherever the Moslems fell, the Christians rushed forward, seized upon their horses, and stripped them of their armour and their weapons. They fought desperately and successfully, for they fought for their country and their faith. The battle raged for several hours; the field was strewn with slain, and the Moors, overcome by the multitude and fury of their foes, began to falter.

When Taric beheld his troops retreating before the enemy, he threw himself before them, and, rising in his stirrups, "O Moslems! conquerors of Africa!" cried he, "whither would you fly? The sea is behind you, the enemy before; you have no hope but in your valour and the help of God. Do as I do and the day is ours!"

With these words he put spurs to his horse and sprung

among the enemy, striking to right and left, cutting down and destroying, while his steed, fierce as himself, trampled upon the foot-soldiers, and tore them with his teeth. At this moment a mighty shout arose in various parts of the field; the noontide hour had arrived. The Bishop Oppas with the two princes, who had hitherto kept their hands out of the fight, suddenly went over to the enemy, and turned their weapons upon their astonished countrymen. From that moment the fortune of the day was changed, and the field of battle became a scene of wild confusion and bloody massacre. The Christians knew not whom to contend with, or whom to trust. It seemed as if madness had seized upon their friends and kinsmen, and that their worst enemies were among themselves.

The courage of Don Roderick rose with his danger. Throwing off the cumbrous robes of royalty and descending from his car, he sprang upon his steed Orelia, grasped his lance and buckler, and endeavoured to rally his retreating troops. He was surrounded and assailed by a multitude of his own traitorous subjects, but defended himself with wondrous prowess. The enemy thickened around him; his loyal band of cavaliers were slain, bravely fighting in his defence; the last that was seen of the king was in the midst of the enemy, dealing death at every blow.

A complete panic fell upon the Christians; they threw away their arms and fled in all directions. They were pursued with dreadful slaughter, until the darkness of the night rendered it impossible to distinguish friend from foe. Taric then called off his troops from the pursuit, and took possession of the royal camp; and the couch which had been pressed so uneasily on the preceding night by Don Roderick, now yielded sound repose to his conqueror.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIELD OF BATTLE AFTER THE DEFEAT—THE FATE OF RODERICK.

ON the morning after the battle, the Arab leader, Taric ben Zeyad, rode over the bloody field of the Guadalete, strewn with the ruins of those splendid armies which had so lately

* This battle is called indiscriminately by historians the battle of Guadalete, or of Xeres, from the neighbourhood of that city.

passed like glorious pageants along the river banks. There Moor and Christian, horseman and horse, lay gashed with hideous wounds; and the river, still red with blood, was filled with the bodies of the slain. The gaunt Arab was as a wolf roaming through the fold he had laid waste. On every side his eye revelled on the ruin of the country, on the wrecks of haughty Spain. There lay the flower of her youthful chivalry, mangled and destroyed, and the strength of her yeomanry prostrated in the dust. The Gothic noble lay confounded with his vassals; the peasant with the prince; all ranks and dignities were mingled in one bloody massacre.

When Taric had surveyed the field, he caused the spoils of the dead and the plunder of the camp to be brought before him. The booty was immense. There were massy chains, and rare jewels of gold; pearls and precious stones; rich silks and brocades, and all other luxurious decorations in which the Gothic nobles had indulged in the latter times of their degeneracy. A vast amount of treasure was likewise found, which had been brought by Roderick for the expenses of the war.

Taric then ordered that the bodies of the Moslem warriors should be interred; as for those of the Christians, they were gathered in heaps, and vast pyres of wood were formed, on which they were consumed. The flames of these pyres rose high in the air, and were seen afar off in the night; and when the Christians beheld them from the neighbouring hills, they beat their breasts and tore their hair, and lamented over them as over the funeral fires of their country. The carnage of that battle infected the air for two whole months, and bones were seen lying in heaps upon the field for more than forty years; nay, when ages had passed and gone, the husbandman, turning up the soil, would still find fragments of Gothic cuirasses and helms, and Moorish scimitars, the relics of that dreadful fight.

For three days the Arabian horsemen pursued the flying Christians; hunting them over the face of the country; so that but a scanty number of that mighty host escaped to tell the tale of their disaster.

Taric ben Zeyad considered his victory incomplete so long as the Gothic monarch survived; he proclaimed great rewards, therefore, to whomsoever should bring Roderick to him, dead or alive. A diligent search was accordingly made in every direction, but for a long time in vain; at length a soldier brought to Taric the head of a Christian warrior, on which was

a cap decorated with feathers and precious stones. The Arab leader received it as the head of the unfortunate Roderick, and sent it, as a trophy of his victory, to Muza ben Nosier, who, in like manner, transmitted it to the caliph at Damascus. The Spanish historians, however, have always denied its identity.

A mystery has ever hung, and ever must continue to hang, over the fate of King Roderick, in that dark and doleful day of Spain. Whether he went down amidst the storm of battle, and atoned for his sins and errors by a patriot grave, or whether he survived to repent of them in hermit exile, must remain matter of conjecture and dispute. The learned Archbishop Rodrigo, who has recorded the events of this disastrous field, affirms that Roderick fell beneath the vengeful blade of the traitor Julian, and thus expiated with his blood his crime against the hapless Florinda; but the archbishop stands alone in his record of the fact. It seems generally admitted that Orelia, the favourite war-horse, was found entangled in a marsh on the borders of the Guadalete, with the sandals and mantle and royal insignia of the king lying close by him. The river at this place ran broad and deep, and was encumbered with the dead bodies of warriors and steeds; it has been supposed, therefore, that he perished in the stream; but his body was not found within its waters.

When several years had passed away, and men's minds, being restored to some degree of tranquillity, began to occupy themselves about the events of this dismal day, a rumour arose that Roderick had escaped from the carnage on the banks of the Guadalete, and was still alive. It was said, that having from a rising ground caught a view of the whole field of battle, and seen that the day was lost, and his army flying in all directions, he likewise sought his safety in flight. It is added, that the Arab horsemen, while scouring the mountains in quest of fugitives, found a shepherd arrayed in the royal robes, and brought him before the conqueror, believing him to be the king himself. Count Julian soon dispelled the error. On being questioned, the trembling rustic declared that while tending his sheep in the folds of the mountains, there came a cavalier on a horse wearied and spent and ready to sink beneath the spur. That the cavalier with an authoritative voice and menacing air commanded him to exchange garments with him, and clad himself in his rude garb of sheep-skin, and took his crook and his scrip of provisions, and continued up the rugged de-

files of the mountains leading towards Castile, until he was lost to view.*

This tradition was fondly cherished by many, who clung to the belief in the existence of their monarch as their main hope for the redemption of Spain. It was even affirmed that he had taken refuge, with many of his host, in an island of the "Ocean sea," from whence he might yet return once more to elevate his standard, and battle for the recovery of his throne.

Year after year, however, elapsed, and nothing was heard of Don Roderick; yet, like Sebastian of Portugal, and Arthur of England, his name continued to be a rallying point for popular faith, and the mystery of his end to give rise to romantic fables. At length, when generation after generation had sunk into the grave, and near two centuries had passed and gone, traces were said to be discovered that threw a light on the final fortunes of the unfortunate Roderick. At that time, Don Alphonso the Great, King of Leon, had wrested the city of Viseo in Lusitania from the hands of the Moslems. As his soldiers were ranging about the city and its environs, one of them discovered in a field, outside of the walls, a small chapel or hermitage, with a sepulchre in front, on which was inscribed this epitaph in Gothic characters:

HIC REQUIESCIT RUDERICUS,
ULTIMUS REX GOTHORUM.

(Here lies Roderick,
The last king of the Goths.)

It has been believed by many that this was the veritable tomb of the monarch, and that in this hermitage he had finished his days in solitary penance. The warrior, as he contemplated the supposed tomb of the once haughty Roderick, forgot all his faults and errors, and shed a soldier's tear over his memory; but when his thoughts turned to Count Julian, his patriotic indignation broke forth, and with his dagger he inscribed a rude malediction on the stone.

"Accursed," said he, "be the impious and headlong vengeance of the traitor Julian. He was a murderer of his king; a destroyer of his kindred; a betrayer of his country. May his name be bitter in every mouth, and his memory infamous to all generations!"

Here ends the legend of Don Roderick.

* Bleda, Cron. L. 2, c. 9. Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique, L. 1, c. 10.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FOREGOING LEGEND.

THE TOMB OF RODERICK.

THE venerable Sebastiano, Bishop of Salamanca, declares that the inscription on the tomb at Viseo in Portugal existed in his time, and that he had seen it. A particular account of the exile and hermit life of Roderick is furnished by Berganza, on the authority of Portuguese chronicles.

Algunos historiadores Portugueses aseguran, que el Rey Rodrigo, perdida la battalla, huyo a tierra de Merida, y se recogio en el monasterio de Cauliniano, en donde, arrepentido de sus culpas, procuro confesarlas con muchas lagrimas. Deseando mas retiro, y escogiendo por compañero a un monge llamado Roman, y elevando la Imagen de Nazareth, que Cyriaco monge de nacion griego avra traído de Jerusalem al monasterio de Cauliniano, se subio á un monte muy aspero, que estaba sobre el mar, junto al lugar de Pederneyra. Vivio Rodrigo en compania de el monge en el hueco de una gruta por espacio de un año; despues se passo á la ermita de san Miguel, que estaba cerca de Viseo, en donde murio y fue sepultado.

Puedese ver esta relacion en las notas de Don Thomas Tamayo sobre Paulo deacano. El chronicon de san Millan, que llega hasta el año 883, deze que, hasta su tiempo, si ignora el fin del Rey Rodrigo. Pocos años despues el Rey Don Alonzo el Magno, aviéndolo ganado la ciudad de Viseo, encontro en una iglesia el epitafio que en romance dize—aquí yaze Rodrigo, ultimo Rey de los Godos.—Berganza, L. 1, c. 13.

THE CAVE OF HERCULES.

As the story of the necromantic tower is one of the most famous as well as least credible points in the history of Don Roderick, it may be well to fortify or buttress it by some account of another marvel of the city of Toledo. This ancient city, which dates its existence almost from the time of the flood, claiming as its founder Tubal, the son of Japhet, and grandson of Noah,* has been the warrior hold of many generations, and a strange diversity of races. It bears traces of the

* Salazar, Hist. Gran. Cardinal, Prologo, vol. i. plan 1.

artifices and devices of its various occupants, and is full of mysteries and subjects for antiquarian conjecture and perplexity. It is built upon a high rocky promontory, with the Tagus brawling round its base, and is overlooked by cragged and precipitous hills. These hills abound with clefts and caverns; and the promontory itself, on which the city is built, bears traces of vaults and subterraneous habitations, which are occasionally discovered under the ruins of ancient houses, or beneath the churches and convents.

These are supposed by some to have been the habitations or retreats of the primitive inhabitants; for it was the custom of the ancients, according to Pliny, to make caves in high and rocky places, and live in them through fear of floods; and such a precaution, says the worthy Don Pedro de Roxas, in his history of Toledo, was natural enough among the first Toledans, seeing that they founded their city shortly after the deluge, while the memory of it was still fresh in their minds.

Some have supposed these secret caves and vaults to have been places of concealment of the inhabitants and their treasure, during times of war and violence; or rude temples for the performance of religious ceremonies in times of persecution. There are not wanting other, and grave writers, who give them a still darker purpose. In these caves, say they, were taught the diabolical mysteries of magic; and here were performed those infernal ceremonies and incantations horrible in the eyes of God and man. "History," says the worthy Don Pedro de Roxas, "is full of accounts that the magi taught and performed their magic and their superstitious rites in profound caves and secret places; because as this art of the devil was prohibited from the very origin of Christianity, they always sought for hidden places in which to practise it." In the time of the Moors this art, we are told, was publicly taught at their universities, the same as astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics, and at no place was it cultivated with more success than at Toledo. Hence this city has ever been darkly renowned for mystic science; insomuch that the magic art was called by the French, and by other nations, the *Arte Toledana*.

Of all the marvels, however, of this ancient, picturesque, romantic, and necromantic city, none in modern times surpass the cave of Hercules, if we may take the account of Don Pedro de Roxas for authentic. The entrance to this cave is within the church of San Gines, situated in nearly the highest part of the city. The portal is secured by massy doors, opening within

the walls of the church, but which are kept rigorously closed. The cavern extends under the city and beneath the bed of the Tagus to the distance of three leagues beyond. It is, in some places, of rare architecture, built of small stones curiously wrought, and supported by columns and arches.

In the year 1546 an account of this cavern was given to the archbishop and cardinal Don Juan Martinez Siliceo, who, desirous of examining it, ordered the entrance to be cleaned. A number of persons, furnished with provisions, lanterns, and cords, then went in, and having proceeded about half a league, came to a place where there was a kind of chapel or temple, having a table or altar, with several statues of bronze in niches or on pedestals.

While they were regarding this mysterious scene of ancient worship or incantation, one of the statues fell, with a noise that echoed through the cavern, and smote the hearts of the adventurers with terror. Recovering from their alarm they proceeded onward, but were soon again dismayed by a roaring and rushing sound that increased as they advanced. It was made by a furious and turbulent stream, the dark waters of which were too deep and broad and rapid to be crossed. By this time their hearts were so chilled with awe, and their thoughts so bewildered, that they could not seek any other passage by which they might advance; so they turned back and hastened out of the cave. It was nightfall when they sallied forth, and they were so much affected by the terror they had undergone, and by the cold and damp air of the cavern, to which they were the more sensible from its being in the summer, that all of them fell sick and several of them died. Whether the archbishop was encouraged to pursue his research and gratify his curiosity, the history does not mention.

Alonzo Telles de Meneses, in his history of the world, records, that not long before his time a boy of Toledo, being threatened with punishment by his master, fled and took refuge in this cave. Fancying his pursuer at his heels, he took no heed of the obscurity or coldness of the cave, but kept groping and blundering forward, until he came forth at three leagues' distance from the city.

Another and very popular story of this cave, current among the common people, was, that in its remote recesses lay concealed a great treasure of gold, left there by the Romans. Whoever would reach this precious hoard must pass through several caves or grottoes; each having its particular terror,

and all under the guardianship of a ferocious dog, who has the key of all the gates, and watches day and night. At the approach of any one he shows his teeth, and makes a hideous growling; but no adventurer after wealth has had courage to brave a contest with this terrific Cerberus.

The most intrepid candidate on record was a poor man who had lost his all, and had those grand incentives to desperate enterprise, a wife and a large family of children. Hearing the story of this cave, he determined to venture alone in search of the treasure. He accordingly entered, and wandered many hours, bewildered, about the cave. Often would he have returned, but the thoughts of his wife and children urged him on. At length he arrived near to the place where he supposed the treasure lay hidden; but here, to his dismay, he beheld the floor of the cavern strewn with human bones; doubtless the remains of adventurers like himself, who had been torn to pieces.

Losing all courage, he now turned and sought his way out of the cave. Horrors thickened upon him as he fled. He beheld direful phantoms glaring and gibbering around him, and heard the sound of pursuit in the echoes of his footsteps. He reached his home overcome with affright; several hours elapsed before he could recover speech to tell his story, and he died on the following day.

The judicious Don Pedro de Roxas holds the account of the buried treasure for fabulous, but the adventure of this unlucky man for very possible; being led on by avarice, or rather the hope of retrieving a desperate fortune. He, moreover, pronounces his dying shortly after coming forth as very probable; because the darkness of the cave; its coldness; the fright at finding the bones; the dread of meeting the imaginary dog, all joining to operate upon a man who was past the prime of his days, and enfeebled by poverty and scanty food, might easily cause his death.

Many have considered this cave as intended originally for a sally or retreat from the city in case it should be taken; an opinion rendered probable, it is thought, by its grandeur and great extent.

The learned Salazar de Mendoza, however, in his history of the grand cardinal of Spain, affirms it as an established fact, that it was first wrought out of the rock by Tubal, the son of Japhet, and grandson of Noah, and afterwards repaired and greatly augmented by Hercules the Egyptian, who made it his

habitation after he had erected his pillars at the straits of Gibraltar. Here, too, it is said, he read magic to his followers, and taught them those supernatural arts by which he accomplished his vast achievements. Others think that it was a temple dedicated to Hercules; as was the case, according to Pomponius Mela, with the great cave in the rock of Gibraltar; certain it is, that it has always borne the name of "The Cave of Hercules."

There are not wanting some who have insinuated that it was a work dating from the time of the Romans, and intended as a cloaca or sewer of the city; but such a grovelling insinuation will be treated with proper scorn by the reader, after the nobler purposes to which he has heard this marvellous cavern consecrated.

From all the circumstances here adduced from learned and reverend authors, it will be perceived that Toledo is a city fruitful of marvels, and that the necromantic tower of Hercules has more solid foundation than most edifices of similar import in ancient history.

The writer of these pages will venture to add the result of his personal researches respecting the far-famed cavern in question. Rambling about Toledo in the year 1826, in company with a small knot of antiquity hunters, among whom was an eminent British painter,* and an English nobleman,† who has since distinguished himself in Spanish historical research, we directed our steps to the church of San Gines, and inquired for the portal of the secret cavern. The sacristan was a voluble and communicative man, and one not likely to be niggard of his tongue about any thing he knew, or slow to boast of any marvel pertaining to his church; but he professed utter ignorance of the existence of any such portal. He remembered to have heard, however, that immediately under the entrance to the church there was an arch of mason-work, apparently the upper part of some subterranean portal; but that all had been covered up and a pavement laid down thereon; so that whether it led to the magic cave or the necromantic tower remains a mystery, and so must remain until some monarch or archbishop shall again have courage and authority to break the spell.

* Mr. D. W—kie.

† Lord Mah—n.

LEGEND OF THE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN.*

CHAPTER I.

CONSTERNATION OF SPAIN—CONDUCT OF THE CONQUERORS—
MISSIVES BETWEEN TARIC AND MUZA.

THE overthrow of King Roderick and his army on the banks of the Guadalete, threw open all southern Spain to the inroads of the Moslems. The whole country fled before them; villages and hamlets were hastily abandoned; the inhabitants placed their aged and infirm, their wives and children, and their most precious effects, on mules and other beasts of burden, and, driving before them their flocks and herds, made for distant parts of the land; for the fastnesses of the mountains, and for such of the cities as yet possessed walls and bulwarks. Many gave out, faint and weary, by the way, and fell into the hands of the enemy; others, at the distant sight of a turban or a Moslem standard, or on hearing the clangour of a trumpet, abandoned their flocks and herds and hastened their flight with their families. If their pursuers gained upon them, they threw by their household goods and whatever was of burthen, and thought themselves fortunate to escape, naked and destitute, to a place of refuge. Thus the roads were covered with scattered flocks and herds, and with spoil of all kind.

The Arabs, however, were not guilty of wanton cruelty or ravage; on the contrary, they conducted themselves with a moderation but seldom witnessed in more civilized conquerors. Taric el Tuerto, though a thorough man of the sword, and one

* In this legend most of the facts respecting the Arab inroads into Spain are on the authority of Arabian writers; who had the most accurate means of information. Those relative to the Spaniards are chiefly from old Spanish chronicles. It is to be remarked that the Arab accounts have most the air of verity, and the events as they relate them are in the ordinary course of common life. The Spanish accounts, on the contrary, are full of the marvellous; for there were no greater romancers than the monkish chroniclers.

whose whole thoughts were warlike, yet evinced wonderful judgment and discretion. He checked the predatory habits of his troops with a rigorous hand. They were forbidden, under pain of severe punishment, to molest any peaceable and unfortified towns, or any unarmed and unresisting people, who remained quiet in their homes. No spoil was permitted to be made excepting in fields of battle, in camps of routed foes, or in cities taken by the sword.

Taric had little need to exercise his severity; his orders were obeyed through love, rather than fear, for he was the idol of his soldiery. They admired his restless and daring spirit, which nothing could dismay. His gaunt and sinewy form, his fiery eye, his visage seamed with scars, were suited to the hardihood of his deeds; and when mounted on his foaming steed, careering the field of battle with quivering lance or flashing scimitar, his Arabs would greet him with shouts of enthusiasm. But what endeared him to them more than all was his soldier-like contempt of gain. Conquest was his only passion; glory the only reward he coveted. As to the spoil of the conquered, he shared it freely among his followers, and squandered his own portion with open-handed generosity.

While Taric was pushing his triumphant course through Andalusia, tidings of his stupendous victory on the banks of the Guadalete were carried to Muza ben Nosier. Messengers after messengers arrived, vying who should most extol the achievements of the conqueror and the grandeur of the conquest. "Taric," said they, "has overthrown the whole force of the unbelievers in one mighty battle. Their king is slain; thousands and tens of thousands of their warriors are destroyed; the whole land lies at our mercy; and city after city is surrendering to the victorious arms of Taric."

The heart of Muza ben Nosier sickened at these tidings, and, instead of rejoicing at the success of the cause of Islam, he trembled with jealous fear lest the triumphs of Taric in Spain should eclipse his own victories in Africa. He despatched missives to the Caliph Waled Almanzor, informing him of these new conquests, but taking the whole glory to himself, and making no mention of the services of Taric; or at least, only mentioning him incidentally as a subordinate commander. "The battles," said he, "have been terrible as the day of judgment; but by the aid of Allah we have gained the victory."

He then prepared in all haste to cross over into Spain and assume the command of the conquering army; and he wrote

a letter in advance to interrupt Taric in the midst of his career. "Wherever this letter may find thee," said he, "I charge thee halt with thy army and await my coming. Thy force is inadequate to the subjugation of the land, and by rashly venturing, thou mayst lose every thing. I will be with thee speedily, with a reinforcement of troops competent to so great an enterprise."

The letter overtook the veteran Taric while in the full glow of triumphant success; having overrun some of the richest parts of Andalusia, and just received the surrender of the city of Ecija. As he read the letter the blood mantled in his sunburnt cheek and fire kindled in his eye, for he penetrated the motives of Muza. He suppressed his wrath, however, and turning with a bitter expression of forced composure to his captains, "Unsaddle your steeds," said he, "and plant your lances in the earth; set up your tents and take your repose: for we must await the coming of the Wali with a mighty force to assist us in our conquest."

The Arab warriors broke forth with loud murmurs at these words: "What need have we of aid," cried they, "when the whole country is flying before us; and what better commander can we have than Taric to lead us on to victory?"

Count Julian, also, who was present, now hastened to give his traitorous counsel.

"Why pause," cried he, "at this precious moment? The great army of the Goths is vanquished, and their nobles are slaughtered or dispersed. Follow up your blow before the land can recover from its panic. Overrun the provinces, seize upon the cities, make yourself master of the capital, and your conquest is complete."*

The advice of Julian was applauded by all the Arab chieftains, who were impatient of any interruption in their career of conquest. Taric was easily persuaded to what was the wish of his heart. Disregarding the letter of Muza, therefore, he prepared to pursue his victories. For this purpose he ordered a review of his troops on the plain of Ecija. Some were mounted on steeds which they had brought from Africa; the rest he supplied with horses taken from the Christians. He repeated his general orders, that they should inflict no wanton injury, nor plunder any place that offered no resistance. They were forbidden, also, to encumber themselves with booty, or even with

*Conde, p. 1, c. 10

provisions; but were to scour the country with all speed, and seize upon all its fortresses and strong-holds.

He then divided his host into three several armies. One he placed under the command of the Greek renegado, Magued el Rumi, a man of desperate courage; and sent it against the ancient city of Cordova. Another was sent against the city of Malaga, and was led by Zayd ben Kesadi, aided by the Bishop Oppas. The third was led by Taric himself, and with this he determined to make a wide sweep through the kingdom.*

CHAPTER II.

CAPTURE OF GRANADA—SUBJUGATION OF THE ALPUXARRA MOUNTAINS.

THE terror of the arms of Taric ben Zeyad went before him; and, at the same time, the report of his lenity to those who submitted without resistance. Wherever he appeared, the towns, for the most part, sent forth some of their principal inhabitants to proffer a surrender; for they were destitute of fortifications, and their fighting men had perished in battle. They were all received into allegiance to the caliph, and were protected from pillage or molestation.

After marching some distance through the country, he entered one day a vast and beautiful plain, interspersed with villages, adorned with groves and gardens, watered by winding rivers, and surrounded by lofty mountains. It was the famous vega, or plain of Granada, destined to be for ages the favourite abode of the Moslems. When the Arab conquerors beheld this delicious vega, they were lost in admiration; for it seemed as if the Prophet had given them a paradise on earth, as a reward for their services in his cause.

Taric approached the city of Granada, which had a formidable aspect, seated on lofty hills and fortified with Gothic walls and towers, and with the red castle or citadel, built in times of old by the Phœnicians or the Romans. As the Arab chieftain eyed the place, he was pleased with its stern warrior look, contrasting with the smiling beauty of its vega, and the freshness and voluptuous abundance of its hills and valleys. He pitched

* *Cronica de España*, de Alonzo el Sabio. P. 3, c. 1.

his tents before its walls, and made preparations to attack it with all his force.

The city, however, bore but the semblance of power. The flower of its youth had perished in the battle of the Gaudalete; many of the principal inhabitants had fled to the mountains, and few remained in the city excepting old men, women, and children, and a number of Jews, which last were well disposed to take part with the conquerors. The city, therefore, readily capitulated, and was received into vassalage on favourable terms. The inhabitants were to retain their property, their laws, and their religion; their churches and priests were to be respected; and no other tribute was required of them than such as they had been accustomed to pay to their Gothic kings.

On taking possession of Granada, Taric garrisoned the towers and castles, and left as alcaide or governor a chosen warrior named Betiz Aben Habuz, a native of Arabia Felix, who had distinguished himself by his valour and abilities. This alcaide subsequently made himself king of Granada, and built a palace on one of its hills; the remains of which may be seen at the present day.†

Even the delights of Granada had no power to detain the active and ardent Taric. To the east of the city he beheld a lofty chain of mountains, towering to the sky, and crowned with shining snow. These were the "Mountains of the Sun and Air;" and the perpetual snows on their summits gave birth to streams that fertilized the plains. In their bosoms, shut up among cliffs and precipices, were many small valleys of great beauty and abundance. The inhabitants were a bold and hardy race, who looked upon their mountains as everlasting

† The house shown as the ancient residence of Aben Habuz is called *la Casa del Gallo*, or the house of the weathercock; so named, says Pedraza, in his history of Granada, from a bronze figure of an Arab horseman, armed with lance and buckler, which once surmounted it, and which varied with every wind. On this warlike weathercock was inscribed, in Arabic characters,

Dice el sabio Aben Habuz
Que así se defiende el Andaluz.

(In this way, says Aben Habuz the wise,
The Andalusian his foe defies.)

The Casa del Gallo, even until within twenty years, possessed two great halls beautifully decorated with morisco reliefs. It then caught fire and was so damaged as to require to be nearly rebuilt. It is now a manufactory of coarse canvas, and has nothing of the Moorish character remaining. It commands a beautiful view of the city and the vega.

fortresses that could never be taken. The inhabitants of the surrounding country had fled to these natural fastnesses for refuge, and driven thither their flocks and herds.

Taric felt that the dominion he had acquired of the plains would be insecure until he had penetrated and subdued these haughty mountains. Leaving Aben Habuz, therefore, in command of Granada, he marched with his army across the vega, and entered the folds of the Sierra, which stretch towards the south. The inhabitants fled with affright on hearing the Moorish trumpets, or beholding the approach of the turbaned horsemen, and plunged deeper into the recesses of their mountains. As the army advanced, the roads became more and more rugged and difficult; sometimes climbing great rocky heights, and at other times descending abruptly into deep ravines, the beds of winter torrents. The mountains were strangely wild and sterile; broken into cliffs and precipices of variegated marble. At their feet were little valleys enamelled with groves and gardens, interlaced with silver streams, and studded with villages and hamlets; but all deserted by their inhabitants. No one appeared to dispute the inroad of the Moslems, who continued their march with increasing confidence, their pennons fluttering from rock and cliff, and the valleys echoing to the din of trumpet, drum, and cymbal. At length they came to a defile where the mountains seemed to have been rent asunder to make way for a foaming torrent. The narrow and broken road wound along the dizzy edge of precipices, until it came to where a bridge was thrown across the chasm. It was a fearful and gloomy pass; great beetling cliffs overhung the road, and the torrent roared below. This awful defile has ever been famous in the warlike history of those mountains, by the name, in former times, of the Barranco de Tocos, and at present of the bridge of Tablete. The Saracen army entered fearlessly into the pass; a part had already crossed the bridge, and was slowly toiling up the rugged road on the opposite side, when great shouts arose, and every cliff appeared suddenly peopled with furious foes. In an instant a deluge of missiles of every sort was rained upon the astonished Moslems. Darts, arrows, javelins, and stones, came whistling down, singling out the most conspicuous cavaliers; and at times great masses of rock, bounding and thundering along the mountain side, crushed whole ranks at once, or hurled horses and riders over the edge of the precipices.

It was in vain to attempt to brave this mountain warfare.

The enemy were beyond the reach of missiles, and safe from pursuit; and the horses of the Arabs were here an incumbrance rather than an aid. The trumpets sounded a retreat, and the army retired in tumult and confusion, harassed by the enemy until extricated from the defile. Taric, who had beheld cities and castles surrendering without a blow, was enraged at being braved by a mere horde of mountain boors, and made another attempt to penetrate the mountains, but was again waylaid and opposed with horrible slaughter.

The fiery son of Ishmael foamed with rage at being thus checked in his career and foiled in his revenge. He was on the point of abandoning the attempt, and returning to the vega, when a Christian boor sought his camp, and was admitted to his presence. The miserable wretch possessed a cabin and a little patch of ground among the mountains, and offered, if these should be protected from ravage, to inform the Arab commander of a way by which troops of horse might be safely introduced into the bosom of the sierra, and the whole subdued. The name of this caitiff was Fandino, and it deserves to be perpetually recorded with ignominy. His case is an instance how much it is in the power, at times, of the most insignificant being to do mischief, and how all the valour of the magnanimous and the brave may be defeated by the treason of the selfish and the despicable.

Instructed by this traitor, the Arab commander caused ten thousand foot-soldiers and four thousand horsemen, commanded by a valiant captain, named Ibrahim Albuxarra, to be conveyed by sea to the little port of Adra, at the Mediterranean foot of the mountains. Here they landed, and, guided by the traitor, penetrated to the heart of the sierra, laying every thing waste. The brave mountaineers, thus hemmed in between two armies, destitute of fortresses and without hope of succour, were obliged to capitulate; but their valour was not without avail, for never, even in Spain, did vanquished people surrender on prouder or more honourable terms. We have named the wretch who betrayed his native mountains; let us, equally, record the name of him whose pious patriotism saved them from desolation. It was the reverend Bishop Centerio. While the warriors rested on their arms in grim and menacing tranquillity among the cliffs, this venerable prelate descended to the Arab tents in the valley, to conduct the capitulation. In stipulating for the safety of his people, he did not forget that they were brave men, and that they still had weapons in their

hands. He obtained conditions accordingly. It was agreed that they should be permitted to retain their houses, lands, and personal effects; that they should be unmolested in their religion, and their temples and priests respected; and that they should pay no other tribute than such as they had been accustomed to render to their kings. Should they prefer to leave the country and to remove to any part of Christendom, they were to be allowed to sell their possessions; and to take with them the money, and all their other effects.*

Ibrahim Albuxarra remained in command of the territory, and the whole sierra, or chain of mountains, took his name, which has since been slightly corrupted into that of the Alpuxarras. The subjugation of this rugged region, however, was for a long time incomplete; many of the Christians maintained a wild and hostile independence, living in green glens and scanty valleys among the heights; and the sierra of the Alpuxarras has, in all ages, been one of the most difficult parts of Andalusia to be subdued.

CHAPTER III.

EXPEDITION OF MAGUED AGAINST CORDOVA—DEFENCE OF THE PATRIOT PELISTES.

WHILE the veteran Taric was making this wide circuit through the land, the expedition under Magued the renegade proceeded against the city of Cordova. The inhabitants of that ancient place had beheld the great army of Don Roderick spreading like an inundation over the plain of the Guadalquivir, and had felt confident that it must sweep the infidel invaders from the land. What then was their dismay, when scattered fugitives, wild with horror and affright, brought them tidings of the entire overthrow of that mighty host, and the disappearance of the king! In the midst of their consternation, the Gothic noble, Pelistes, arrived at their gates, haggard with fatigue of body and anguish of mind, and leading a remnant of his devoted cavaliers, who had survived the dreadful battle of the Guadalete. The people of Cordova knew the valiant and steadfast spirit of Pelistes, and rallied round

* Pedraza, *Hist. Granad.* p. 3, c. 2. Bleda, *Cronica*, L. 2, c. 10.

him as a last hope. "Roderick is fallen," cried they, "and we have neither king nor captain; be unto us as a sovereign; take command of our city, and protect us in this hour of peril!"

The heart of Pelistes was free from ambition, and was too much broken by grief to be flattered by the offer of command; but he felt above every thing for the woes of his country, and was ready to assume any desperate service in her cause. "Your city," said he, "is surrounded by walls and towers, and may yet check the progress of the foe. Promise to stand by me till the last, and I will undertake your defence." The inhabitants all promised implicit obedience and devoted zeal; for what will not the inhabitants of a wealthy city promise and profess in a moment of alarm. The instant, however, that they heard of the approach of the Moslem troops, the wealthier citizens packed up their effects and fled to the mountains, or to the distant city of Toledo. Even the monks collected the riches of their convents and churches, and fled. Pelistes, though he saw himself thus deserted by those who had the greatest interest in the safety of the city, yet determined not to abandon its defence. He had still his faithful though scanty band of cavaliers, and a number of fugitives of the army; in all amounting to about four hundred men. He stationed guards, therefore, at the gates and in the towers, and made every preparation for a desperate resistance.

In the meantime, the army of Moslems and apostate Christians advanced, under the command of the Greek renegado, Magued, and guided by the traitor Julian. While they were yet at some distance from the city, their scouts brought to them a shepherd, whom they had surprised on the banks of the Guadalquivir. The trembling hind was an inhabitant of Cordova, and revealed to them the state of the place, and the weakness of its garrison.

"And the walls and gates," said Magued, "are they strong and well guarded?"

"The walls are high, and of wondrous strength," replied the shepherd, "and soldiers hold watch at the gates by day and night. But there is one place where the city may be secretly entered. In a part of the wall, not far from the bridge, the battlements are broken, and there is a breach at some height from the ground. Hard by stands a fig-tree, by the aid of which the wall may easily be scaled."

Having received this information, Magued halted with his

army, and sent forward several renegado Christians, partisans of Count Julian, who entered Cordova as if flying before the enemy. On a dark and tempestuous night, the Moslems approached to the end of the bridge which crosses the Guadalquivir, and remained in ambush. Magued took a small party of chosen men, and, guided by the shepherd, forded the stream and groped silently along the wall to the place where stood the fig-tree. The traitors, who had fraudulently entered the city, were ready on the wall to render assistance. Magued ordered his followers to make use of the long folds of their turbans instead of cords, and succeeded without difficulty in clambering into the breach.

Drawing their scimitars, they now hastened to the gate which opened towards the bridge; the guards, suspecting no assault from within, were taken by surprise, and easily overpowered; the gate was thrown open, and the army that had remained in ambush, rushed over the bridge, and entered without opposition.

The alarm had by this time spread throughout the city; but already a torrent of armed men was pouring through the streets. Pelistes sallied forth with his cavaliers and such of the soldiery as he could collect, and endeavoured to repel the foe; but every effort was in vain. The Christians were slowly driven from street to street, and square to square, disputing every inch of ground; until, finding another body of the enemy approaching to attack them in rear, they took refuge in a convent, and succeeded in throwing to and barring the ponderous doors. The Moors attempted to force the gates, but were assailed with such showers of missiles from the windows and battlements that they were obliged to retire. Pelistes examined the convent, and found it admirably calculated for defence. It was of great extent, with spacious courts and cloisters. The gates were massive, and secured with bolts and bars; the walls were of great thickness; the windows high and grated; there was a great tank or cistern of water, and the friars, who had fled from the city, had left behind a good supply of provisions. Here, then, Pelistes proposed to make a stand, and to endeavour to hold out until succour should arrive from some other city. His proposition was received with shouts by his loyal cavaliers; not one of whom but was ready to lay down his life in the service of his commander.

CHAPTER IV.

DEFENCE OF THE CONVENT OF ST. GEORGE BY PELISTES.

For three long and anxious months did the good knight Pelistes and his cavaliers defend their sacred asylum against the repeated assaults of the infidels. The standard of the true faith was constantly displayed from the loftiest tower, and a fire blazed there throughout the night, as signals of distress to the surrounding country. The watchman from his turret kept a wary lookout over the land, hoping in every cloud of dust to descry the glittering helms of Christian warriors. The country, however, was forlorn and abandoned, or if perchance a human being was perceived, it was some Arab horseman, careering the plain of the Guadalquivir as fearlessly as if it were his native desert.

By degrees the provisions of the convent were consumed, and the cavaliers had to slay their horses, one by one, for food. They suffered the wasting miseries of famine without a murmur, and always met their commander with a smile. Pelistes, however, read their sufferings in their wan and emaciated countenances, and felt more for them than for himself. He was grieved at heart that such loyalty and valour should only lead to slavery or death, and resolved to make one desperate attempt for their deliverance. Assembling them one day in the court of the convent, he disclosed to them his purpose.

“Comrades and brothers in arms,” said he, “it is needless to conceal danger from brave men. Our case is desperate; our countrymen either know not or heed not our situation, or have not the means to help us. There is but one chance of escape; it is full of peril, and, as your leader, I claim the right to brave it. To-morrow at break of day I will sally forth and make for the city gates at the moment of their being opened; no one will suspect a solitary horseman; I shall be taken for one of those recreant christians who have basely mingled with the enemy. If I succeed in getting out of the city I will hasten to Toledo for assistance. In all events I shall be back in less than twenty days. Keep a vigilant lookout toward the nearest mountain. If you behold five lights blazing upon its summit, be assured I am at hand with succour, and prepare yourselves to sally forth upon the city as I attack

the gates. Should I fail in obtaining aid, I will return to die with you."

When he had finished, his warriors would fain have severally undertaken the enterprise, and they remonstrated against his exposing himself to such peril; but he was not to be shaken from his purpose. On the following morning, ere the break of day, his horse was led forth, caparisoned, into the court of the convent, and Pelistes appeared in complete armour. Assembling his cavaliers in the chapel, he prayed with them for some time before the altar of the holy Virgin. Then rising and standing in the midst of them, "God knows, my companions," said he, "whether we have any longer a country; if not, better were we in our graves. Loyal and true have ye been to me, and loyal have ye been to my son, even to the hour of his death; and grieved am I that I have no other means of proving my love for you, than by adventuring my worthless life for your deliverance. All I ask of you before I go, is a solemn promise to defend yourselves to the last like brave men and Christian cavaliers, and never to renounce your faith, or throw yourselves on the mercy of the renegado Magued, or the traitor Julian." They all pledged their words, and took a solemn oath to the same effect before the altar.

Pelistes then embraced them one by one, and gave them his benediction, and as he did so his heart yearned over them, for he felt towards them, not merely as a companion in arms and as a commander, but as a father; and he took leave of them as if he had been going to his death. The warriors, on their part, crowded round him in silence, kissing his hands and the hem of his surcoat, and many of the sternest shed tears.

The gray of the dawning had just streaked the east, when Pelistes took lance in hand, hung his shield about his neck, and mounting his steed, issued quietly forth from a postern of the convent. He paced slowly through the vacant streets, and the tramp of his steed echoed afar in that silent hour; but no one suspected a warrior, moving thus singly and tranquilly in an armed city, to be an enemy. He arrived at the gate just at the hour of opening; a foraging party was entering with cattle and with beasts of burden, and he passed unheeded through the throng. As soon as he was out of sight of the soldiers who guarded the gate, he quickened his pace, and at length, galloping at full speed, succeeded in gaining the mountains. Here he paused, and alighted at a solitary farm-house to breathe his panting steed; but had scarce put foot to ground when he

heard the distant sound of pursuit, and beheld a horseman spurring up the mountain.

Throwing himself again upon his steed, he abandoned the road and galloped across the rugged heights. The deep dry channel of a torrent checked his career, and his horse stumbling upon the margin, rolled with his rider to the bottom. Pelistes was sorely bruised by the fall, and his whole visage was bathed in blood. His horse, too, was maimed and unable to stand, so that there was no hope of escape. The enemy drew near, and proved to be no other than Magued, the renegado general, who had perceived him as he issued forth from the city, and had followed singly in pursuit. "Well met, señor alcaýde!" exclaimed he, "and overtaken in good time. Surrender yourself my prisoner."

Pelistes made no other reply than by drawing his sword, bracing his shield, and preparing for defence. Magued, though an apostate, and a fierce warrior, possessed some sparks of knightly magnanimity. Seeing his adversary dismounted, he disdained to take him at a disadvantage, but, alighting, tied his horse to a tree.

The conflict that ensued was desperate and doubtful, for seldom had two warriors met so well matched or of equal prowess. Their shields were hacked to pieces, the ground was strewn with fragments of their armour, and stained with their blood. They paused repeatedly to take breath; regarding each other with wonder and admiration. Pelistes, however, had been previously injured by his fall, and fought to great disadvantage. The renegado perceived it, and sought not to slay him, but to take him alive. Shifting his ground continually, he wearied his antagonist, who was growing weaker and weaker from the loss of blood. At length Pelistes seemed to summon up all his remaining strength to make a signal blow; it was skilfully parried, and he fell prostrate upon the ground. The renegado ran up, and putting his foot upon his sword, and the point of his scimitar to his throat, called upon him to ask his life; but Pelistes lay without sense, and as one dead. Magued then unlaced the helmet of his vanquished enemy, and seated himself on a rock beside him, to recover breath. In this situation the warriors were found by certain Moorish cavaliers, who marvelled much at the traces of that stern and bloody combat.

Finding there was yet life in the Christian knight, they laid him upon one of their horses, and aiding Magued to remount

his steed, proceeded slowly to the city. As the convoy passed by the convent, the cavaliers looked forth and beheld their commander borne along bleeding and a captive. Furious at the sight, they sallied forth to the rescue, but were repulsed by a superior force and driven back to the great portal of the church. The enemy entered pell-mell with them, fighting from aisle to aisle, from altar to altar, and in the courts and cloisters of the convent. The greater part of the cavaliers died bravely, sword in hand; the rest were disabled with wounds and made prisoners. The convent, which was lately their castle, was now made their prison, and in after-times, in commemoration of this event, was consecrated by the name of St. George of the Captives.

CHAPTER V.

MEETING BETWEEN THE PATRIOT PELISTES AND THE TRAITOR JULIAN.

THE loyalty and prowess of the good knight Pelistes had gained him the reverence even of his enemies. He was for a long time disabled by his wounds, during which he was kindly treated by the Arab chieftains, who strove by every courteous means to cheer his sadness and make him forget that he was a captive. When he was recovered from his wounds they gave him a magnificent banquet, to testify their admiration of his virtues.

Pelistes appeared at the banquet clad in sable armour, and with a countenance pale and dejected, for the ills of his country evermore preyed upon his heart. Among the assembled guests was Count Julian, who held a high command in the Moslem army, and was arrayed in garments of mingled Christian and morisco fashion. Pelistes had been a close and bosom friend of Julian in former times, and had served with him in the wars in Africa, but when the count advanced to accost him with his wonted amity, he turned away in silence and deigned not to notice him; neither, during the whole of the repast, did he address to him ever a word, but treated him as one unknown.

When the banquet was nearly at a close, the discourse turned upon the events of the war, and the Moslem chieftains,

in great courtesy, dwelt upon the merits of many of the Christian cavaliers who had fallen in battle, and all extolled the valour of those who had recently perished in the defence of the convent. Pelistes remained silent for a time, and checked the grief which swelled within his bosom as he thought of his devoted cavaliers. At length, lifting up his voice, "Happy are the dead," said he, "for they rest in peace, and are gone to receive the reward of their piety and valour! I could mourn over the loss of my companions in arms, but they have fallen with honour, and are spared the wretchedness I feel in witnessing the thralldom of my country. I have seen my only son, the pride and hope of my age, cut down at my side; I have beheld kindred, friends, and followers falling one by one around me, and have become so seasoned to those losses that I have ceased to weep. Yet there is one man over whose loss I will never cease to grieve. He was the loved companion of my youth, and the steadfast associate of my graver years. He was one of the most loyal of Christian knights. As a friend he was loving and sincere; as a warrior his achievements were above all praise. What has become of him, alas! I know not. If fallen in battle; and I knew where his bones were laid, whether bleaching on the plains of Xeres, or buried in the waters of the Guadalete, I would seek them out and enshrine them as the relics of a sainted patriot. Or if, like many of his companions in arms, he should be driven to wander in foreign lands, I would join him in his hapless exile, and we would mourn together over the desolation of our country."

Even the hearts of the Arab warriors were touched by the lament of the good Pelistes, and they said—"Who was this peerless friend in whose praise thou art so fervent?"

"His name," replied Pelistes, "was Count Julian."

The Moslem warriors stared with surprise. "Noble cavalier," exclaimed they, "has grief disordered thy senses? Behold thy friend living and standing before thee, and yet thou dost not know him! This, this is Count Julian!"

Upon this, Pelistes turned his eyes upon the count, and regarded him for a time with a lofty and stern demeanour; and the countenance of Julian darkened, and was troubled, and his eye sank beneath the regard of that loyal and honourable cavalier. And Pelistes said, "In the name of God, I charge thee, man unknown! to answer. Dost thou presume to call thyself Count Julian?"

The count reddened with anger at these words. "Pelistes,"

said he, "what means this mockery? thou knowest me well; thou knowest me for Count Julian."

"I know thee for a base impostor!" cried Pelistes. "Count Julian was a noble Gothic knight; but thou appearest in mongrel Moorish garb. Count Julian was a Christian, faithful and devout; but I behold in thee a renegado and an infidel. Count Julian was ever loyal to his king, and foremost in his country's cause; were he living he would be the first to put shield on neck and lance in rest, to clear the land of her invaders; but thou art a hoary traitor! thy hands are stained with the royal blood of the Goths, and thou hast betrayed thy country and thy God! Therefore, I again repeat, man unknown! if thou sayest thou art Count Julian, thou liest! My friend, alas! is dead; and thou art some fiend from hell, which hast taken possession of his body to dishonour his memory and render him an abhorrence among men!" So saying, Pelistes turned his back upon the traitor, and went forth from the banquet; leaving Count Julian overwhelmed with confusion, and an object of scorn to all the Moslem cavaliers.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW TARIC EL TUERTO CAPTURED THE CITY OF TOLEDO THROUGH THE AID OF THE JEWS, AND HOW HE FOUND THE FAMOUS TALISMANIC TABLE OF SOLOMON.

WHILE these events were passing in Cordova, the one-eyed Arab general, Taric el Tuerto, having subdued the city and vega of Granada, and the Mountains of the Sun and Air, directed his march into the interior of the kingdom, to attack the ancient city of Toledo, the capital of the Gothic kings. So great was the terror caused by the rapid conquests of the invaders, that at the very rumour of their approach, many of the inhabitants, though thus in the very citadel of the kingdom, abandoned it and fled to the mountains with their families. Enough remained, however, to have made a formidable defence; and, as the city was seated on a lofty rock, surrounded by massive walls and towers, and almost girdled by the Tagus, it threatened a long resistance. The Arab warriors pitched their tents in the vega, on the borders of the river, and prepared for a tedious siege.

One evening, as Taric was seated in his tent meditating on the mode in which he should assail this rock-built city, certain of the patrols of the camp brought a stranger before him. "As we were going our rounds," said they, "we beheld this man lowered down with cords from a tower, and he delivered himself into our hands, praying to be conducted to thy presence, that he might reveal to thee certain things important for thee to know."

Taric fixed his eyes upon the stranger: he was a Jewish rabbi, with a long beard which spread upon his gabardine, and descended even to his girdle. "What hast thou to reveal?" said he to the Israelite. "What I have to reveal," replied the other, "is for thee alone to hear; command then, I entreat thee, that these men withdraw." When they were alone he addressed Taric in Arabic: "Know, O leader of the host of Islam," said he, "that I am sent to thee on the part of the children of Israel resident in Toledo. We have been oppressed and insulted by the Christians in the time of their prosperity, and now that they are threatened with siege, they have taken from us all our provisions and our money; they have compelled us to work like slaves, repairing their walls; and they oblige us to bear arms and guard a part of the towers. We abhor their yoke, and are ready, if thou wilt receive us as subjects and permit us the free enjoyment of our religion and our property, to deliver the towers we guard into thy hands, and to give thee safe entrance into the city."

The Arab chief was overjoyed at this proposition, and he rendered much honour to the rabbi, and gave orders to clothe him in a costly robe, and to perfume his beard with essences of a pleasant odour, so that he was the most sweet smelling of his tribe; and he said, "Make thy words good, and put me in possession of the city, and I will do all and more than thou hast required, and will bestow countless wealth upon thee and thy brethren."

Then a plan was devised between them by which the city was to be betrayed and given up. "But how shall I be secured," said he, "that all thy tribe will fulfil what thou hast engaged, and that this is not a stratagem to get me and my people into your power?"

"This shall be thy assurance," replied the rabbi: "Ten of the principal Israelites will come to this tent and remain as hostages."

"It is enough," said Taric; and he made oath to accomplish

all that he had promised; and the Jewish hostages came and delivered themselves into his hands.

On a dark night, a chosen band of Moslem warriors approached the part of the walls guarded by the Jews, and were secretly admitted into a postern gate and concealed within a tower. Three thousand Arabs were at the same time placed in ambush among rocks and thickets, in a place on the opposite side of the river, commanding a view of the city. On the following morning Taric ravaged the gardens of the valley, and set fire to the farm-houses, and then breaking up his camp marched off as if abandoning the siege.

The people of Toledo gazed with astonishment from their walls at the retiring squadrons of the enemy, and scarcely could credit their unexpected deliverance; before night there was not a turban nor a hostile lance to be seen in the vega. They attributed it all to the special intervention of their patron saint, Leocadia; and the following day being palm Sunday, they sallied forth in procession, man, woman, and child, to the church of that blessed saint, which is situated without the walls, that they might return thanks for her marvellous protection.

When all Toledo had thus poured itself forth, and was marching with cross and relic and solemn chaunt towards the chapel, the Arabs, who had been concealed in the tower, rushed forth and barred the gates of the city. While some guarded the gates, others dispersed themselves about the streets, slaying all who made resistance; and others kindled a fire and made a column of smoke on the top of the citadel. At sight of this signal, the Arabs, in ambush, beyond the river, rose with a great shout, and attacked the multitude who were thronging to the church of St. Leocadia. There was a great massacre, although the people were without arms, and made no resistance; and it is said, in ancient chronicles, that it was the apostate Bishop Oppas who guided the Moslems to their prey, and incited them to this slaughter. The pious reader, says Fray Antonio Agapida, will be slow to believe such turpitude; but there is nothing more venomous than the rancour of an apostate priest; for the best things in this world, when corrupted, become the worst and most baneful.

Many of the Christians had taken refuge within the church, and had barred the doors, but Oppas commanded that fire should be set to the portals, threatening to put every one

within to the sword. Happily the veteran Taric arrived just in time to stay the fury of this reverend renegado. He ordered the trumpets to call off the troops from the carnage, and extended grace to all the surviving inhabitants. They were permitted to remain in quiet possession of their homes and effects, paying only a moderate tribute; and they were allowed to exercise the rites of their religion in the existing churches, to the number of seven, but were prohibited from erecting any others. Those who preferred to leave the city, were suffered to depart in safety, but not to take with them any of their wealth.

Immense spoil was found by Taric in the alcazar, or royal castle, situated on a rocky eminence, in the highest part of the city. Among the regalia treasured up in a secret chamber, were twenty-five regal crowns of fine gold, garnished with jacinths, amethysts, diamonds, and other precious stones. These were the crowns of the different Gothic kings who had reigned in Spain; it having been the usage, on the death of each king, to deposit his crown in this treasury, inscribing on it his name and age.*

When Taric was thus in possession of the city, the Jews came to him in procession, with songs and dances and the sound of timbrel and psaltery, hailing him as their lord, and reminding him of his promises.

The son of Ishmael kept his word with the children of Israel; they were protected in the possession of all their wealth and the exercise of their religion, and were, moreover, rewarded with jewels of gold and jewels of silver, and much moneys.†

A subsequent expedition was led by Taric against Guadalaxara, which surrendered without resistance; he moreover captured the city of Medina Celi, where he found an inestimable table which had formed a part of the spoil taken at Rome by Alaric, at the time that the sacred city was conquered by the Goths. It was composed of one single and entire emerald, and possessed talismanic powers; for traditions affirm that it was the work of genii, and had been wrought by them for King Solomon the wise, the son of David. This marvellous relic was carefully preserved by Taric, as the most precious of all his spoils, being intended by him as a present to the caliph;

* Conde, *Hist. de las Arabes en España*, c. 12.

† The stratagem of the Jews of Toledo is recorded briefly by Bishop Lucas de Tuy, in his chronicle, but is related at large in the chronicle of the Moor Rasis.

and in commemoration of it the city was called by the Arabs, Medina Almeyda; that is to say, "The City of the Table."*

Having made these and other conquests of less importance, and having collected great quantities of gold and silver, and rich stuffs and precious stones, Taric returned with his booty to the royal city of Toledo.

CHAPTER VII.

MUZA BEN NOSIER; HIS ENTRANCE INTO SPAIN, AND CAPTURE CARMONA.

LET us leave for a season the bold Taric in his triumphant progress from city to city, while we turn our eyes to Muza ben Nosier, the renowned Emir of Almagreb, and the commander-in-chief of the Moslem forces of the west. When that jealous chieftain had despatched his letter commanding Taric to pause and await his coming, he immediately made every preparation to enter Spain with a powerful reinforcement, and to take command of the conquering army. He left his eldest son, Abdalasis, in Caervan, with authority over Almagreb, or Western Africa. This Abdalasis was in the flower of his youth, and beloved by the soldiery for the magnanimity and the engaging affability which graced his courage.

Muza ben Nosier crossed the strait of Hercules with a chosen force of ten thousand horse and eight thousand foot, Arabs and Africans. He was accompanied by his two sons, Meruan and Abdelola, and by numerous illustrious Arabian cavaliers of the tribe of the Koreish. He landed his shining legions on the coast of Andalusia, and pitched his tents near to the Guadiana. There first he received intelligence of the disobedience of Taric to his orders, and that, without waiting his arrival, the impetuous chieftain had continued his career, and with his light Arab squadrons had overrun and subdued the noblest provinces and cities of the kingdom.

* According to Arabian legends, this table was a mirror revealing all great events; insomuch that by looking on it the possessor might behold battles and sieges and feats of chivalry, and all actions worthy of renown; and might thus ascertain the truth of all historic transactions. It was a mirror of history, therefore; and had very probably aided King Solomon in acquiring that prodigious knowledge and wisdom for which he was renowned.

The jealous spirit of Muza was still more exasperated by these tidings; he looked upon Taric no longer as a friend and coadjutor, but as an invidious rival, the decided enemy of his glory; and he determined on his ruin. His first consideration, however, was to secure to himself a share in the actual conquest of the land before it should be entirely subjugated.

Taking guides, therefore, from among his Christian captives, he set out to subdue such parts of the country as had not been visited by Taric. The first place which he assailed was the ancient city of Carmona; it was not of great magnitude, but was fortified with high walls and massive towers, and many of the fugitives of the late army had thrown themselves into it.

The Goths had by this time recovered from their first panic; they had become accustomed to the sight of Moslem troops, and their native courage had been roused by danger. Shortly after the Arabs had encamped before their walls, a band of cavaliers made a sudden sally one morning before the break of day, fell upon the enemy by surprise, killed above three hundred of them in their tents, and effected their retreat into the city; leaving twenty of their number dead, covered with honourable wounds, and in the very centre of the camp.

On the following day they made another sally, and fell on a different quarter of the encampment; but the Arabs were on their guard, and met them with superior numbers. After fighting fiercely for a time, they were routed, and fled full speed for the city, with the Arabs hard upon their traces. The guards within feared to open the gate, lest with their friends they should admit a torrent of enemies. Seeing themselves thus shut out, the fugitives determined to die like brave soldiers rather than surrender. Wheeling suddenly round, they opened a path through the host of their pursuers, fought their way back to the camp, and raged about it with desperate fury until they were all slain, after having killed above eight hundred of the enemy.*

Muza now ordered that the place should be taken by storm. The Moslems assailed it on all sides, but were vigorously resisted; many were slain by showers of stones, arrows, and boiling pitch, and many who had mounted with scaling ladders were thrown headlong from the battlements. The alcaide, Galo, aided solely by two men, defended a tower and a portion of the wall; killing and wounding with a cross-bow

* Abulcasim, *Perdida de España*, L. 1, c. 13.

more than eighty of the enemy. The attack lasted above half a day, when the Moslems were repulsed with the loss of fifteen hundred men.

Muza was astonished and exasperated at meeting with such a formidable resistance from so small a city; for it was one of the few places, during that memorable conquest, where the Gothic valour shone forth with its proper lustre. While the Moslem army lay encamped before the place, it was joined by Magued the renegado, and Count Julian the traitor, with one thousand horsemen; most of them recreant Christians, base betrayers of their country, and more savage in their warfare than the Arabs of the desert. To find favour in the eyes of Muza, and to evince his devotion to the cause, the count undertook, by wily stratagem, to put this gallant city in his power.

One evening, just at twilight, a number of Christians, habited as travelling merchants, arrived at one of the gates, conducting a train of mules laden with arms and warlike munitions. "Open the gate quickly," cried they; "we bring supplies for the garrison, but the Arabs have discovered, and are in pursuit of us." The gate was thrown open, the merchants entered with their beasts of burden, and were joyfully received. Meat and drink were placed before them, and after they had refreshed themselves they retired to the quarters allotted to them.

These pretended merchants were Count Julian and a number of his partisans. At the hour of midnight they stole forth silently, and assembling together, proceeded to what was called the Gate of Cordova. Here setting suddenly upon the unsuspecting guards, they put them to the edge of the sword, and throwing open the gates, admitted a great body of the Arabs. The inhabitants were roused from their sleep by sound of drum and trumpet, and the clattering of horses. The Arabs scoured the streets; a horrible massacre was commenced, in which none were spared but such of the females as were young and beautiful, and fitted to grace the harems of the conquerors. The arrival of Muza put an end to the pillage and the slaughter, and he granted favourable terms to the survivors. Thus the valiant little city of Carmona, after nobly resisting the open assaults of the infidels, fell a victim to the treachery of apostate Christians.*

* Cron. gen. de España, por Alonzo el Sabio. P. 3, c. 1.

CHAPTER VIII.

MUZA MARCHES AGAINST THE CITY OF SEVILLE.

AFTER the capture of Carmona, Muza descended into a noble plain, covered with fields of grain, with orchards and gardens, through which glided the soft-flowing Guadalquivir. On the borders of the river stood the ancient city of Seville, surrounded by Roman walls, and defended by its golden tower. Understanding from his spies that the city had lost the flower of its youth in the battle of the Guadalete, Muza anticipated but a faint resistance. A considerable force, however, still remained within the place, and what they wanted in numbers they made up in resolution. For some days they withstood the assaults of the enemy, and defended their walls with great courage. Their want of warlike munitions, however, and the superior force and skill of the besieging army, left them no hope of being able to hold out long. There were two youthful cavaliers of uncommon valour in the city. They assembled the warriors and addressed them. "We cannot save the city," said they; "but at least we may save ourselves, and preserve so many strong arms for the service of our country. Let us cut our way through the infidel force and gain some secure fortress, from whence we may return with augmented numbers for the rescue of the city."

The advice of the young cavaliers was adopted. In the dead of the night the garrison assembled to the number of about three thousand; the most part mounted on horseback. Suddenly sallying from one of the gates, they rushed in a compact body upon the camp of the Saracens, which was negligently guarded, for the Moslems expected no such act of desperation. The camp was a scene of great carnage and confusion; many were slain on both sides; the two valiant leaders of the Christians fell covered with wounds, but the main body succeeded in forcing their way through the centre of the army, and in making their retreat to Beja in Lusitania.

Muza was at a loss to know the meaning of this desperate sally. In the morning he perceived the gates of the city wide open. A number of ancient and venerable men presented themselves at his tent, offering submission and imploring mercy, for none were left in the place but the old, the infirm, and the miserable. Muza listened to them with compassion,

and granted their prayer, and the only tribute he exacted was three measures of wheat and three of barley from each house or family. He placed a garrison of Arabs in the city, and left there a number of Jews to form a body of population. Having thus secured two important places in Andalusia, he passed the boundaries of the province, and advanced with great martial pomp into Lusitania.

CHAPTER IX.

MUZA BESIEGES THE CITY OF MERIDA.

THE army of Muza was now augmented to about eighteen thousand horsemen, but he took with him but few foot-soldiers, leaving them to garrison the conquered towns. He met with no resistance on his entrance into Lusitania. City after city laid its keys at his feet, and implored to be received into peaceful vassalage. One city alone prepared for vigorous defence, the ancient Merida, a place of great extent, uncounted riches, and prodigious strength. A noble Goth named Sacarus was the governor; a man of consummate wisdom, patriotism, and valour. Hearing of the approach of the invaders, he gathered within the walls all the people of the surrounding country, with their horses and mules, their flocks and herds and most precious effects. To insure for a long time a supply of bread, he filled the magazines with grain, and erected wind-mills on the churches. This done, he laid waste the surrounding country to a great extent, so that a besieging army would have to encamp in a desert.

When Muza came in sight of this magnificent city, he was struck with admiration. He remained for some time gazing in silence upon its mighty walls and lordly towers, its vast extent, and the stately palaces and temples with which it was adorned. "Surely," cried he, at length, "all the people of the earth have combined their power and skill to embellish and aggrandize this city. Allah Achbar! Happy will he be who shall have the glory of making such a conquest!"

Seeing that a place so populous and so strongly fortified would be likely to maintain a long and formidable resistance, he sent messengers to Africa to his son Abdalasis, to collect all

the forces that could be spared from the garrisons of Mauritania, and to hasten and reinforce him.

While Muza was forming his encampment, deserters from the city brought him word that a chosen band intended to sally forth at midnight and surprise his camp. The Arab commander immediately took measures to receive them with a counter surprise. Having formed his plan, and communicated it to his principal officers, he ordered that, throughout the day, there should be kept up an appearance of negligent confusion in his encampment. The outposts were feebly guarded; fires were lighted in various places, as if preparing for feasting; bursts of music and shouts of revelry resounded from different quarters, and the whole camp seemed to be rioting in careless security on the plunder of the land. As the night advanced, the fires were gradually extinguished, and silence ensued, as if the soldiery had sunk into deep sleep after the carousal.

In the meantime, bodies of troops had been secretly and silently marched to reinforce the outposts; and the renegado Magued, with a numerous force, had formed an ambuscade in a deep stone quarry by which the Christians would have to pass. These preparations being made, they awaited the approach of the enemy in breathless silence.

About midnight, the chosen force intended for the sally assembled, and the command was confided to Count Tintero, a Gothic cavalier of tried prowess. After having heard a solemn mass and received the benediction of the priest, they marched out of the gate with all possible silence. They were suffered to pass the ambuscade in the quarry without molestation; as they approached the Moslem camp, every thing appeared quiet, for the foot-soldiers were concealed in slopes and hollows, and every Arab horseman lay in his armour beside his steed. The sentinels on the outposts waited until the Christians were close at hand, and then fled in apparent consternation.

Count Tintero gave the signal for assault, and the Christians rushed confidently forward. In an instant an uproar of drums, trumpets, and shrill war-cries burst forth from every side. An army seemed to spring up from the earth; squadrons of horse came thundering on them in front, while the quarry poured forth legions of armed warriors in their rear.

The noise of the terrific conflict that took place was heard on the city walls, and answered by shouts of exultation, for the Christians thought it rose from the terror and confusion of the

Arab camp. In a little while, however, they were undeceived by fugitives from the fight, aghast with terror, and covered with wounds. "Hell itself," cried they, "is on the side of these infidels; the earth casts forth warriors and steeds to aid them. We have fought, not with men, but devils!"

The greater part of the chosen troops who had sallied, were cut to pieces in that scene of massacre, for they had been confounded by the tempest of battle which suddenly broke forth around them. Count Tintero fought with desperate valour, and fell covered with wounds. His body was found the next morning, lying among the slain, and transpierced with half a score of lances. The renegado Magued cut off his head and tied it to the tail of his horse, and repaired with this savage trophy to the tent of Muza; but the hostility of the Arab general was of a less malignant kind. He ordered that the head and body should be placed together upon a bier and treated with becoming reverence.

In the course of the day a train of priests and friars came forth from the city to request permission to seek for the body of the count. Muza delivered it to them, with many soldier-like encomiums on the valour of that good cavalier. The priests covered it with a pall of cloth of gold, and bore it back in melancholy procession to the city, where it was received with loud lamentations.

The siege was now pressed with great vigour, and repeated assaults were made, but in vain. Muza saw, at length, that the walls were too high to be scaled, and the gates too strong to be burst open without the aid of engines, and he desisted from the attack until machines for the purpose could be constructed. The governor suspected from this cessation of active warfare, that the enemy flattered themselves to reduce the place by famine; he caused, therefore, large baskets of bread to be thrown from the wall, and sent a messenger to Muza to inform him that if his army should be in want of bread, he would supply it, having sufficient corn in his granaries for a ten years' siege.*

The citizens, however, did not possess the undaunted spirit of their governor. When they found that the Moslems were constructing tremendous engines for the destruction of their walls, they lost all courage, and, surrounding the governor in a clamorous multitude, compelled him to send forth persons to capitulate.

* Bleda, *Cronica*, L. 2. c. 11.

The ambassadors came into the presence of Muza with awe, for they expected to find a fierce and formidable warrior in one who had filled the land with terror; but to their astonishment, they beheld an ancient and venerable man, with white hair, a snowy beard, and a pale emaciated countenance. He had passed the previous night without sleep, and had been all day in the field; he was exhausted, therefore, by watchfulness and fatigue, and his garments were covered with dust.

"What a devil of a man is this," murmured the ambassadors, one to another, "to undertake such a siege when on the verge of the grave. Let us defend our city the best way we can; surely we can hold out longer than the life of this gray-beard."

They returned to the city, therefore, scoffing at an invader who seemed fitter to lean on a crutch than wield a lance; and the terms offered by Muza, which would otherwise have been thought favourable, were scornfully rejected by the inhabitants. A few days put an end to this mistaken confidence. Abdalasis, the son of Muza, arrived from Africa at the head of his reinforcement; he brought seven thousand horsemen and a host of Barbary archers, and made a glorious display as he marched into the camp. The arrival of this youthful warrior was hailed with great acclamations, so much had he won the hearts of the soldiery by the frankness, the suavity, and generosity of his conduct. Immediately after his arrival a grand assault was made upon the city, and several of the huge battering engines being finished, they were wheeled up and began to thunder against the walls.

The unsteady populace were again seized with terror, and, surrounding their governor with fresh clamours, obliged him to send forth ambassadors a second time to treat of a surrender. When admitted to the presence of Muza, the ambassadors could scarcely believe their eyes, or that this was the same withered, white-headed old man of whom they had lately spoken with scoffing. His hair and beard were tinged of a ruddy brown; his countenance was refreshed by repose and flushed with indignation, and he appeared a man in the matured vigour of his days. The ambassadors were struck with awe. "Surely," whispered they, one to the other, "this must be either a devil or a magician, who can thus make himself old and young at pleasure."

Muza received them haughtily. "Hence," said he, "and tell your people I grant them the same terms I have already pro-

ferred, provided the city be instantly surrendered; but, by the head of Mahomet, if there be any further delay, not one mother's son of ye shall receive mercy at my hands!"

The deputies returned into the city pale and dismayed. "Go forth! go forth!" cried they, "and accept whatever terms are offered; of what avail is it to fight against men who can renew their youth at pleasure? Behold, we left the leader of the infidels an old and feeble man, and to-day we find him youthful and vigorous."*

The place was, therefore, surrendered forthwith, and Muza entered it in triumph. His terms were merciful. Those who chose to remain were protected in persons, possessions, and religion; he took the property of those only who abandoned the city or had fallen in battle; together with all arms and horses, and the treasures and ornaments of the churches. Among these sacred spoils was found a cup made of a single pearl, which a king of Spain, in ancient times, had brought from the temple of Jerusalem when it was destroyed by Nabuchodonosor. This precious relic was sent by Muza to the caliph, and was placed in the principal mosque of the city of Damascus.†

Muza knew how to esteem merit even in an enemy. When Sacarus, the governor of Merida, appeared before him, he lauded him greatly for the skill and courage he had displayed in the defence of his city; and, taking off his own scimitar, which was of great value, girded it upon him with his own hands. "Wear this," said he, "as a poor memorial of my admiration; a soldier of such virtue and valour is worthy of far higher honours."

He would have engaged the governor in his service, or have persuaded him to remain in the city, as an illustrious vassal of the caliph, but the noble-minded Sacarus refused to bend to the yoke of the conquerors; nor could he bring himself to reside contentedly in his country, when subjected to the domination of the infidels. Gathering together all those who chose to accompany him into exile, he embarked to seek some country where he might live in peace and in the free exercise of his religion. What shore these ocean pilgrims landed upon has never been revealed; but tradition vaguely gives us to believe

* Conde, p. 1, c. 13. Ambrosio de Morales. N. B.—In the chronicle of Spain, composed by order of Alonzo the Wise, this anecdote is given as having happened at the siege of Seville.

† Marmol. *Descrip. de Africa*, T. 1, L. 2.

that it was some unknown island far in the bosom of the Atlantic.*

CHAPTER X.

EXPEDITION OF ABDALASIS AGAINST SEVILLE AND THE "LAND OF TADMIR."

AFTER the capture of Merida, Muza gave a grand banquet to his captains and distinguished warriors in that magnificent city. At this martial feast were many Arab cavaliers who had been present in various battles, and they vied with each other in recounting the daring enterprises in which they had been engaged, and the splendid triumphs they had witnessed. While they talked with ardour and exultation, Abdalasis, the son of Muza, alone kept silence, and sat with a dejected countenance. At length, when there was a pause, he turned to his father and addressed him with modest earnestness. "My lord and father," said he, "I blush to hear your warriors recount the toils and dangers they have passed, while I have done nothing to entitle me to their companionship. When I return to Egypt and present myself before the caliph, he will ask me of my services in Spain; what battle I have gained; what town or castle I have taken. How shall I answer him? If you love me, then, as your son, give me a command, entrust to me an enterprise, and let me acquire a name worthy to be mentioned among men."

The eyes of Muza kindled with joy at finding Abdalasis thus ambitious of renown in arms. "Allah be praised!" exclaimed he, "the heart of my son is in the right place. It is becoming in youth to look upwards and be aspiring. Thy desire, Abdalasis, shall be gratified."

An opportunity at that very time presented itself to prove the prowess and discretion of the youth. During the siege of Merida, the Christian troops which had taken refuge at Beja had reinforced themselves from Peñaflor, and suddenly returning, had presented themselves before the gates of the city of Seville.† Certain of the Christian inhabitants threw open the

* Abulcasim, *Perdida de España*, L. 1, c. 13.

† Espinosa, *Antq. y Grand. de Seville*, L. 2, c. 3.

gates and admitted them. The troops rushed to the alcazar, took it by surprise, and put many of the Moslem garrison to the sword; the residue made their escape, and fled to the Arab camp before Merida, leaving Seville in the hands of the Christians.

The veteran Muza, now that the siege of Merida was at an end, was meditating the recapture and punishment of Seville at the very time when Abdalasis addressed him. "Behold, my son," exclaimed he, "an enterprise worthy of thy ambition! Take with thee all the troops thou hast brought from Africa; reduce the city of Seville again to subjection, and plant thy standard upon its alcazar. But stop not there: carry thy conquering sword into the southern parts of Spain; thou wilt find there a harvest of glory yet to be reaped."

Abdalasis lost no time in departing upon this enterprise. He took with him Count Julian, Magued el Rumi, and the Bishop Oppas, that he might benefit by their knowledge of the country. When he came in sight of the fair city of Seville, seated like a queen in the midst of its golden plain, with the Guadalquivir flowing beneath its walls, he gazed upon it with the admiration of a lover, and lamented in his soul that he had to visit it as an avenger. His troops, however, regarded it with wrathful eyes, thinking only of its rebellion, and of the massacre of their countrymen in the alcazar.

The principal people in the city had taken no part in this gallant but fruitless insurrection; and now, when they beheld the army of Abdalasis encamped upon the banks of the Guadalquivir, would fain have gone forth to make explanations, and intercede for mercy. The populace, however, forbade any one to leave the city, and barring the gates, prepared to defend themselves to the last.

The place was attacked with resistless fury. The gates were soon burst open; the Moslems rushed in, panting for revenge. They confined not their slaughter to the soldiery in the alcazar, but roamed through every street, confounding the innocent with the guilty in one bloody massacre, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Abdalasis could at length succeed in staying their sanguinary career.*

The son of Muza proved himself as mild in conquest as he had been intrepid in assault. The moderation and benignity of his conduct soothed the terrors of the vanquished, and his

* Conde, P. 1, c. 14.

wise precautions restored tranquillity. Having made proper regulations for the protection of the inhabitants, he left a strong garrison in the place to prevent any future insurrection, and then departed on the further prosecution of his enterprise.

Wherever he went his arms were victorious; and his victories were always characterised by the same magnanimity. At length he arrived on the confines of that beautiful region comprising lofty and precipitous mountains and rich and delicious plains, afterwards known by the name of the kingdom of Murcia. All this part of the country was defended by the veteran Theodomir, who, by skilful management, had saved a remnant of his forces after the defeat on the banks of the Guadalete.

Theodomir was a stanch warrior, but a wary and prudent man. He had experienced the folly of opposing the Arabs in open field, where their cavalry and armour gave them such superiority; on their approach, therefore, he assembled all his people capable of bearing arms, and took possession of the cliffs and mountain passes. "Here," said he, "a simple goatherd, who can hurl down rocks and stones, is as good as a warrior armed in proof." In this way he checked and harassed the Moslem army in all its movements; showering down missiles upon it from overhanging precipices, and waylaying it in narrow and rugged defiles, where a few raw troops could make stand against a host.

Theodomir was in a fair way to baffle his foes and oblige them to withdraw from his territories; unfortunately, however, the wary veteran had two sons with him, young men of hot and heavy valour, who considered all this prudence of their father as savouring of cowardice, and who were anxious to try their prowess in the open field. "What glory," said they, "is to be gained by destroying an enemy in this way, from the covert of rocks and thickets?"

"You talk like young men," replied the veteran. "Glory is a prize one may fight for abroad, but safety is the object when the enemy is at the door."

One day, however, the young men succeeded in drawing down their father into the plain. Abdalasis immediately seized on the opportunity and threw himself between the Goths and their mountain fastnesses. Theodomir saw too late the danger into which he was betrayed. "What can our raw troops do," said he, "against those squadrons of horse that move like cas-

ties? Let us make a rapid retreat to Orihuela and defend ourselves from behind its walls."

"Father," said the eldest son, "it is too late to retreat; remain here with the reserve while my brother and I advance. Fear nothing; am not I your son, and would I not die to defend you?"

"In truth," replied the veteran, "I have my doubts whether you are my son. But if I remain here, and you should all be killed, where then would be my protection? Come," added he, turning to the second son, "I trust that thou art virtually my son; let us hasten to retreat before it is too late."

"Father," replied the youngest, "I have not a doubt that I am honestly and thoroughly your son, and as such I honour you; but I owe duty likewise to my mother, and when I sallied to the war she gave me her blessing as long as I should act with valour, but her curse should I prove craven and fly the field. Fear nothing, father; I will defend you while living, and even after you are dead. You shall never fail of an honourable sepulture among your kindred."

"A pestilence on ye both," cried Theodomir, "for a brace of misbegotten madmen! What care I, think ye, where ye lay my body when I am dead? One day's existence in a hovel is worth an age of interment in a marble sepulchre. Come, my friends," said he, turning to his principal cavaliers, "let us leave these hot-headed striplings and make our retreat; if we tarry any longer the enemy will be upon us."

Upon this the cavaliers and proud hidalgos drew up scornfully and tossed their heads: "What do you see in us," said they, "that you think we will show our backs to the enemy? Forward! was ever the good old Gothic watchword, and with that we will live and die!"

While time was lost in these disputes, the Moslem army kept advancing, until retreat was no longer practicable. The battle was tumultuous and bloody. Theodomir fought like a lion, but it was all in vain: he saw his two sons cut down, and the greater part of their rash companions, while his raw mountain troops fled in all directions.

Seeing there was no longer any hope, he seized the bridle of a favourite page who was near him, and who was about spurring for the mountains. "Part not from me," said he, "but do thou at least attend to my counsel, my son; and, of a truth, I believe thou art my son; for thou art the offspring of one of my handmaids who was kind unto me." And indeed the youth

marvellously resembled him. Turning then the reins of his own steed, and giving him the spur, he fled amain from the field, followed by the page; nor did he stop until he arrived within the walls of Orihuela.

Ordering the gates to be barred and bolted, he prepared to receive the enemy. There were but few men in the city capable of bearing arms, most of the youth having fallen in the field. He caused the women, therefore, to clothe themselves in male attire, to put on hats and helmets, to take long reeds in their hands instead of lances, and to cross their hair upon their chins in semblance of beards. With these troops he lined the walls and towers.

It was about the hour of twilight that Abdalasis approached with his army, but he paused when he saw the walls so numerously garrisoned. Then Theodomir took a flag of truce in his hand, and put a herald's tabard on the page, and they two sallied forth to capitulate, and were graciously received by Abdalasis.

"I come," said Theodomir, "on the behalf of the commander of this city to treat for terms worthy of your magnanimity and of his dignity. You perceive that the city is capable of withstanding a long siege, but he is desirous of sparing the lives of his soldiers. Promise that the inhabitants shall be at liberty to depart unmolested with their property, and the city will be delivered up to you to-morrow morning without a blow; otherwise we are prepared to fight until not a man be left."

Abdalasis was well pleased to get so powerful a place upon such easy terms, but stipulated that the garrison should lay down their arms. To this Theodomir readily assented, with the exception, however, of the governor and his retinue, which was granted out of consideration for his dignity. The articles of capitulation were then drawn out, and when Abdalasis had affixed his name and seal, Theodomir took the pen and wrote his signature. "Behold in me," said he, "the governor of the city!"

Abdalasis was pleased with the hardihood of the commander of the place in thus venturing personally into his power, and entertained the veteran with still greater honour. When Theodomir returned to the city, he made known the capitulation, and charged the inhabitants to pack up their effects during the night and be ready to sally forth in the morning.

At the dawn of day the gates were thrown open, and Abdalasis looked to see a great force issuing forth, but, to his surprise,

beheld merely Theodomir and his page in battered armour, followed by a multitude of old men, women, and children.

Abdalasis waited until the whole had come forth, then turning to Theodomir, "Where," cried he, "are the soldiers whom I saw last evening lining the walls and towers?"

"Soldiers have I none," replied the veteran. "As to my garri-son, behold it before you. With these women did I man my walls, and this my page is my herald, guard, and retinue."

Upon this the Bishop Oppas and Count Julian exclaimed that the capitulation was a base fraud and ought not to be complied with; but Abdalasis relished the stratagem of the old soldier, and ordered that the stipulations of the treaty should be faithfully performed. Nay, so high an opinion did he conceive of the subtle wisdom of this commander, that he permitted him to remain in authority over the surrounding country on his acknowledging allegiance and engaging to pay tribute to the caliph; and all that part of Spain, comprising the beautiful provinces of Murcia and Valencia, was long after known by the Arabic name of its defender, and is still recorded in Arabian chronicles as "The land of Tadmir."*

Having succeeded in subduing this rich and fruitful region, and having gained great renown for his generosity as well as valour, Abdalasis returned with the chief part of his army to the city of Seville.

CHAPTER XI.

MUZA ARRIVES AT TOLEDO—INTERVIEW BETWEEN HIM AND TARIC.

WHEN Muza ben Nosier had sent his son Abdalasis to subdue Seville, he departed for Toledo to call Taric to account for his disobedience to his orders; for, amidst all his own successes, the prosperous career of that commander preyed upon his mind. What can content the jealous and ambitious heart? As Muza passed through the land, towns and cities submitted to him without resistance; he was lost in wonder at the richness of the country and noble monuments of art with which it was adorned; when he beheld the bridges, construct-

* Conde, p. 1. *Cronica del Moro Rasis*. *Cron. gen. España*, por Alonzo el Sabio, p. 3, c. 1.

ed in ancient times by the Romans, they seemed to him the work, not of men, but of genii. Yet all these admirable objects only made him repine the more that he had not had the exclusive glory of invading and subduing the land; and exasperating him the more against Taric, for having apparently endeavoured to monopolize the conquest.

Taric heard of his approach, and came forth to meet him at Talavera, accompanied by many of the most distinguished companions of his victories, and with a train of horses and mules laden with spoils, with which he trusted to propitiate the favour of his commander. Their meeting took place on the banks of the rapid river Tietar, which rises in the mountains of Placencia and throws itself into the Tagus. Muza, in former days, while Taric had acted as his subordinate and indefatigable officer, had cherished and considered him as a second self; but now that he had started up to be a rival, he could not conceal his jealousy. When the veteran came into his presence, he regarded him for a moment with a stern and indignant aspect. "Why hast thou disobeyed my orders?" said he. "I commanded thee to await my arrival with reinforcements, but thou hast rashly overrun the country, endangering the loss of our armies and the ruin of our cause."

"I have acted," replied Taric, "in such manner as I thought would best serve the cause of Islam, and in so doing I thought to fulfil the wishes of Muza. Whatever I have done has been as your servant; behold your share, as commander-in-chief, of the spoils which I have collected." So saying, he produced an immense treasure in silver and gold and costly stuffs, and precious stones, and spread it before Muza.

The anger of the Arab commander was still more kindled at the sight of this booty, for it proved how splendid had been the victories of Taric; but he restrained his wrath for the present, and they proceeded together in moody silence to Toledo. When he entered this royal city, however, and ascended to the ancient palace of the Gothic kings, and reflected that all this had been a scene of triumph to his rival, he could no longer repress his indignation. He demanded of Taric a strict account of all the riches he had gathered in Spain, even of the presents he had reserved for the caliph, and, above all, he made him yield up his favourite trophy, the talismanic table of Solomon. When all this was done, he again upbraided him bitterly with his disobedience of orders, and with the rashness of his conduct. "What blind confidence in fortune hast thou

shown," said he, "in overrunning such a country and assailing such powerful cities with thy scanty force! What madness, to venture every thing upon a desperate chance, when thou knewest I was coming with a force to make the victory secure. All thy success has been owing to mere luck, not to judgment nor generalship."

He then bestowed high praises upon the other chieftains for their services in the cause of Islam, but they answered not a word, and their countenances were gloomy and discontented; for they felt the injustice done to their favourite leader. As to Taric, though his eye burned like fire, he kept his passion within bounds. "I have done the best I could to serve God and the caliph," said he, emphatically; "my conscience acquits me, and I trust my sovereign will do the same."

"Perhaps he may," replied Muza, bitterly; "but, in the meantime, I cannot confide his interests to a desperado who is heedless of orders and throws every thing at hazard. Such a general is unworthy to be intrusted with the fate of armies."

So saying, he divested Taric of his command, and gave it to Magued the renegado. The gaunt Taric still maintained an air of stern composure. His only words were, "The caliph will do me justice!" Muza was so transported with passion at this laconic defiance that he ordered him to be thrown into prison, and even threatened his life.

Upon this, Magued el Rumi, though he had risen by the disgrace of Taric, had the generosity to speak out warmly in his favour. "Consider," said he to Muza, "what may be the consequences of this severity. Taric has many friends in the army; his actions, too, have been signal and illustrious, and entitle him to the highest honours and rewards, instead of disgrace and imprisonment."

The anger of Muza, however, was not to be appeased; and he trusted to justify his measures by despatching missives to the caliph, complaining of the insubordination of Taric, and his rash and headlong conduct. The result proved the wisdom of the caution given by Magued. In the course of a little while Muza received a humiliating letter from the caliph, ordering him to restore Taric to the command of the soldiers "whom he had so gloriously conducted;" and not to render useless "one of the best swords in Islam!" *

It is thus the envious man brings humiliation and reproach

* Conde, Part 1, c. 15.

upon himself, in endeavouring to degrade a meritorious rival. When the tidings came of the justice rendered by the caliph to the merits of the veteran, there was general joy throughout the army, and Muza read in the smiling countenances of every one around him a severe censure upon his conduct. He concealed, however, his deep humiliation, and affected to obey the orders of his sovereign with great alacrity; he released Taric from prison, feasted him at his own table, and then publicly replaced him at the head of his troops. The army received its favourite veteran with shouts of joy, and celebrated with rejoicings the reconciliation of the commanders; but the shouts of the soldiery were abhorrent to the ears of Muza.

CHAPTER XII.

MUZA PROSECUTES THE SCHEME OF CONQUEST—SIEGE OF SARA-GOSSA.—COMPLETE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN.

THE dissensions, which for a time had distracted the conquering army, being appeased, and the Arabian generals being apparently once more reconciled, Muza, as commander-in-chief, proceeded to complete the enterprise by subjugating the northern parts of Spain. The same expeditious mode of conquest that had been sagaciously adopted by Taric, was still pursued. The troops were lightly armed, and freed from every superfluous incumbrance. Each horseman, beside his arms, carried a small sack of provisions, a copper vessel in which to cook them, and a skin which served him for surcoat and for bed. The infantry carried nothing but their arms. To each regiment or squadron was allowed a limited number of sumpter mules and attendants; barely enough to carry their necessary baggage and supplies: nothing was permitted that could needlessly diminish the number of fighting men, delay their rapid movements, or consume their provisions. Strict orders were again issued, prohibiting, on pain of death, all plunder excepting the camp of an enemy, or cities given up to pillage.*

The armies now took their several lines of march. That

* Conde, p. 1, c. 15.

under Taric departed towards the northeast; beating up the country towards the source of the Tagus; traversing the chain of the Iberian or Arragonian mountains, and pouring down into the plains and valleys watered by the Ebro. It was wonderful to see, in so brief a space of time, such a vast and difficult country penetrated and subdued, and the invading army, like an inundating flood, pouring its streams into the most remote recesses.

While Taric was thus sweeping the country to the northeast, Muza departed in an opposite direction; yet purposing to meet him, and join their forces in the north. Bending his course westwardly, he made a circuit behind the mountains, and then, advancing into the open country, displayed his banners before Salamanca, which surrendered without resistance. From hence he continued on towards Astorga, receiving the terrified submission of the land; then turning up the valley of the Douro, he ascended the course of that famous river towards the east; crossed the Sierra de Moncayo, and, arriving on the banks of the Ebro, marched down along its stream, until he approached the strong city of Saragossa, the citadel of all that part of Spain. In this place had taken refuge many of the most valiant of the Gothic warriors; the remnants of armies, and fugitives from conquered cities. It was one of the last rallying points of the land. When Muza arrived, Taric had already been for some time before the place, laying close siege; the inhabitants were pressed by famine, and had suffered great losses in repeated combats, but there was a spirit and obstinacy in their resistance surpassing any thing that had yet been witnessed by the invaders.

Muza now took command of the siege, and ordered a general assault upon the walls. The Moslems planted their scaling ladders, and mounted with their accustomed intrepidity, but were vigorously resisted; nor could all their efforts obtain them a footing upon the battlements. While they were thus assailing the walls, Count Julian ordered a heap of combustibles to be placed against one of the gates, and set on fire. The inhabitants attempted in vain from the barbican to extinguish the flames. They burnt so fiercely, that in a little while the gate fell from its hinges. Count Julian galloped into the city, mounted upon a powerful charger, himself and his steed all covered with mail. He was followed by three hundred of his partisans, and supported by Magued the renegado, with a troop of horse.

The inhabitants disputed every street and public square; they made barriers of dead bodies, fighting behind these ramparts of their slaughtered countrymen. Every window and roof was filled with combatants; the very women and children joined in the desperate fight, throwing down stones and missiles of all kinds, and scalding water upon the enemy.

The battle raged until the hour of vespers, when the principal inhabitants held a parley, and capitulated for a surrender. Muza had been incensed at their obstinate resistance, which had cost the lives of so many of his soldiers; he knew, also, that in the city were collected the riches of many of the towns of eastern Spain. He demanded, therefore, beside the usual terms, a heavy sum to be paid down by the citizens, called the contribution of blood; as by this they redeemed themselves from the edge of the sword. The people were obliged to comply. They collected all the jewels of their richest families, and all the ornaments of their temples, and laid them at the feet of Muza; and placed in his power many of their noblest youths as hostages. A strong garrison was then appointed, and thus the fierce city of Saragossa was subdued to the yoke of the conqueror.

The Arab generals pursued their conquests even to the foot of the Pyrenees; Taric then descended along the course of the Ebro, and continued along the Mediterranean coast; subduing the famous city of Valencia, with its rich and beautiful domains, and carrying the success of his arms even to Denia.

Muza undertook with his host a wider range of conquest. He overcame the cities of Barcelona, Gerona, and others that lay on the skirts of the eastern mountains; then crossing into the land of the Franks, he captured the city of Narbonne; in a temple of which he found seven equestrian images of silver, which he brought off as trophies of his victory.* Returning into Spain, he scoured its northern regions along Galicia and the Asturias; passed triumphantly through Lusitania, and arrived once more in Andalusia, covered with laurels and enriched with immense spoils.

Thus was completed the subjugation of unhappy Spain. All its cities and fortresses, and strong-holds, were in the hands of the Saracens, excepting some of the wild mountain tracts that bordered the Atlantic, and extended towards the north. Here, then, the story of the conquest might conclude, but that the

* Conde, p. 1, c. 16.

indefatigable chronicler, Fray Antonio Agapida, goes on to record the fate of those persons who were most renowned in the enterprise. We shall follow his steps, and avail ourselves of his information, laboriously collected from various sources; and, truly, the story of each of the actors in this great historical drama, bears with it its striking moral, and is full of admonition and instruction

CHAPTER XIII.

FEUD BETWEEN THE ARAB GENERALS—THEY ARE SUMMONED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE CALIPH AT DAMASCUS—RECEPTION OF TARIQ.

THE heart of Muza ben Nosier was now lifted up, for he considered his glory complete. He held a sway that might have gratified the ambition of the proudest sovereign, for all western Africa and the newly acquired peninsula of Spain were obedient to his rule; and he was renowned throughout all the lands of Islam as the great conqueror of the west. But sudden humiliation awaited him in the very moment of his highest triumph.

Notwithstanding the outward reconciliation of Muza and Taric, a deep and implacable hostility continued to exist between them; and each had busy partisans who distracted the armies by their feuds. Letters were incessantly despatched to Damascus by either party, exalting the merits of their own leader and decrying his rival. Taric was represented as rash, arbitrary, and prodigal, and as injuring the discipline of the army, by sometimes treating it with extreme rigour, and at other times giving way to licentiousness and profusion. Muza was lauded as prudent, sagacious, dignified, and systematic in his dealings. The friends of Taric, on the other hand, represented him as brave, generous, and high-minded; scrupulous in reserving to his sovereign his rightful share of the spoils, but distributing the rest bounteously among his soldiers, and thus increasing their alacrity in the service. "Muza, on the contrary," said they, "is grasping and insatiable; he levies intolerable contributions and collects immense treasure, but sweeps it all into his own coffers."

The caliph was at length wearied out by these complaints, and feared that the safety of the cause might be endangered by the dissensions of the rival generals. He sent letters, therefore, ordering them to leave suitable persons in charge of their several commands, and appear, forthwith, before him at Damascus.

Such was the greeting from his sovereign that awaited Muza on his return from the conquest of northern Spain. It was a grievous blow to a man of his pride and ambition; but he prepared instantly to obey. He returned to Cordova, collecting by the way all the treasures he had deposited in various places. At that city he called a meeting of his principal officers, and of the leaders of the faction of apostate Christians, and made them all do homage to his son Abdalasis, as emir or governor of Spain. He gave this favourite son much sage advice for the regulation of his conduct, and left with him his nephew, Ayub, a man greatly honoured by the Moslems for his wisdom and discretion; exhorting Abdalasis to consult him on all occasions and consider him as his bosom counsellor. He made a parting address to his adherents, full of cheerful confidence; assuring them that he would soon return, loaded with new favours and honours by his sovereign, and enabled to reward them all for their faithful services.

When Muza sallied forth from Cordova, to repair to Damascus, his cavalcade appeared like the sumptuous pageant of some oriental potentate; for he had numerous guards and attendants splendidly armed and arrayed, together with four hundred hostages, who were youthful cavaliers of the noblest families of the Goths, and a great number of captives of both sexes, chosen for their beauty, and intended as presents for the caliph. Then there was a vast train of beasts of burden, laden with the plunder of Spain; for he took with him all the wealth he had collected in his conquests; and all the share that had been set apart for his sovereign. With this display of trophies and spoils, showing the magnificence of the land he had conquered, he looked with confidence to silence the calumnies of his foes.

As he traversed the valley of the Guadalquivir he often turned and looked back wistfully upon Cordova; and, at the distance of a league, when about to lose sight of it, he checked his steed upon the summit of a hill, and gazed for a long time upon its palaces and towers. "O Cordova!" exclaimed he, "great and glorious art thou among cities, and abundant in all

delights. With grief and sorrow do I part from thee, for sure I am it would give me length of days to abide within thy pleasant walls!" When he had uttered these words, say the Arabian chronicles, he resumed his wayfaring; but his eyes were bent upon the ground, and frequent sighs bespoke the heaviness of his heart.

Embarking at Cadiz he passed over to Africa with all his people and effects, to regulate his government in that country. He divided the command between his sons, Abdelola and Meruan, leaving the former in Tangier, and the latter in Cairvan. Thus having secured, as he thought, the power and prosperity of his family, by placing all his sons as his lieutenants in the country he had conquered, he departed for Syria, bearing with him the sumptuous spoils of the west.

While Muza was thus disposing of his commands, and moving cumbrously under the weight of wealth, the veteran Taric was more speedy and alert in obeying the summons of the caliph. He knew the importance, where complaints were to be heard, of being first in presence of the judge; beside, he was ever ready to march at a moment's warning, and had nothing to impede him in his movements. The spoils he had made in his conquests had either been shared among his soldiers, or yielded up to Muza, or squandered away with open-handed profusion. He appeared in Syria with a small train of war-worn followers, and had no other trophies to show than his battered armour, and a body seamed with scars. He was received, however, with rapture by the multitude, who crowded to behold one of those conquerors of the west, whose wonderful achievements were the theme of every tongue. They were charmed with his gaunt and martial air, his hard sunburnt features, and his scathed eye. "All hail," cried they, "to the sword of Islam, the terror of the unbelievers! Behold the true model of a warrior, who despises gain and seeks for nought but glory!"

Taric was graciously received by the caliph, who asked tidings of his victories. He gave a soldier-like account of his actions, frank and full, without any feigned modesty, yet without vain-glory. "Commander of the faithful," said he, "I bring thee no silver, nor gold, nor precious stones, nor captives, for what spoils I did not share with my soldiers I gave up to Muza as my commander. How I have conducted myself the honourable warriors of thy host will tell thee; nay, let our

enemies, the Christians, be asked if I have ever shown myself cowardly or cruel or rapacious."

"What kind of people are these Christians?" demanded the caliph.

"The Spaniards," replied Taric, "are lions in their castles, eagles in their saddles, but mere women when on foot. When vanquished they escape like goats to the mountains, for they need not see the ground they tread on."

"And tell me of the Moors of Barbary."

"They are like Arabs in the fierceness and dexterity of their attacks, and in their knowledge of the stratagems of war; they resemble them, too, in feature, in fortitude, and hospitality; but they are the most perfidious people upon earth, and never regard promise or plighted faith."

"And the people of Afranc; what sayest thou of them?"

"They are infinite in number, rapid in the onset, fierce in battle, but confused and headlong in flight."

"And how fared it with thee among these people? Did they sometimes vanquish thee?"

"Never, by Allah!" cried Taric, with honest warmth; "never did a banner of mine fly the field. Though the enemy were two to one, my Moslems never shunned the combat!"

The caliph was well pleased with the martial bluntness of the veteran, and showed him great honour; and wherever Taric appeared he was the idol of the populace.

CHAPTER XIV.

MUZA ARRIVES AT DAMASCUS—HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE CALIPH—THE TABLE OF SOLOMON—A RIGOROUS SENTENCE.

SHORTLY after the arrival of Taric el Tuerto at Damascus, the caliph fell dangerously ill, insomuch that his life was despaired of. During his illness, tidings were brought that Muza ben Nosier had entered Syria with a vast cavalcade, bearing all the riches and trophies gained in the western conquests. Now Suleiman ben Abdelmelec, brother to the caliph, was successor to the throne, and he saw that his brother had not long to live, and wished to grace the commencement of his reign by this triumphant display of the spoils of Christendom; he sent messengers, therefore, to Muza, saying, "The caliph is ill and

cannot receive thee at present; I pray thee tarry on the road until his recovery." Muza, however, paid no attention to the messages of Suleiman, but rather hastened his march to arrive before the death of the caliph. And Suleiman treasured up his conduct in his heart.

Muza entered the city in a kind of triumph, with a long train of horses and mules and camels laden with treasure, and with the four hundred sons of Gothic nobles as hostages, each decorated with a diadem and a girdle of gold; and with one hundred Christian damsels, whose beauty dazzled all beholders. As he passed through the streets he ordered purses of gold to be thrown among the populace, who rent the air with acclamations. "Behold," cried they, "the veritable conqueror of the unbelievers! Behold the true model of a conqueror, who brings home wealth to his country!" And they heaped benedictions on the head of Muza.

The Caliph Waled Almanzor rose from his couch of illness to receive the emir; who, when he repaired to the palace, filled one of its great courts with treasures of all kinds; the halls, too, were thronged with the youthful hostages, magnificently attired, and with Christian damsels, lovely as the houries of paradise. When the caliph demanded an account of the conquest of Spain, he gave it with great eloquence; but, in describing the various victories, he made no mention of the name of Taric, but spoke as if everything had been effected by himself. He then presented the spoils of the Christians as if they had been all taken by his own hands; and when he delivered to the caliph the miraculous table of Solomon, he dwelt with animation on the virtues of that inestimable talisman.

Upon this, Taric, who was present, could no longer hold his peace. "Commander of the faithful," said he, "examine this precious table, if any part be wanting." The caliph examined the table, which was composed of a single emerald, and he found that one foot was supplied with a foot of gold. The caliph turned to Muza and said, "Where is the other foot of the table?" Muza answered, "I know not; one foot was wanting when it came into my hands." Upon this, Taric drew from beneath his robe a foot of emerald of like workmanship to the others, and fitting exactly to the table. "Behold, O commander of the faithful!" cried he, "a proof of the real finder of the table; and so is it with the greater part of the spoils exhibited by Muza as trophies of his achievements. It was I who gained them, and who captured the cities in which they

were found. If you want proof, demand of these Christian cavaliers here present, most of whom I captured; demand of those Moslem warriors who aided me in my battles."

Muza was confounded for a moment, but attempted to vindicate himself. "I spake," said he, "as the chief of your armies, under whose orders and banners this conquest was achieved. The actions of the soldier are the actions of the commander. In a great victory it is not supposed that the chief of the army takes all the captives, or kills all the slain, or gathers all the booty, though all are enumerated in the records of his triumph." The caliph, however, was wroth, and heeded not his words. "You have vaunted your own deserts," said he, "and have forgotten the deserts of others; nay, you have sought to debase another who has loyally served his sovereign; the reward of your envy and covetousness be upon your own head!" So saying, he bestowed a great part of the spoils upon Taric and the other chiefs, but gave nothing to Muza; and the veteran retired amidst the sneers and murmurs of those present.

In a few days the Caliph Waled died, and was succeeded by his brother Suleiman. The new sovereign cherished deep resentment against Muza for having presented himself at court contrary to his command, and he listened readily to the calumnies of his enemies; for Muza had been too illustrious in his deeds not to have many enemies. All now took courage when they found he was out of favour, and they heaped slanders on his head; charging him with embezzling much of the share of the booty belonging to the sovereign. The new caliph lent a willing ear to the accusation, and commanded him to render up all that he had pillaged from Spain. The loss of his riches might have been borne with fortitude by Muza, but the stigma upon his fame filled his heart with bitterness. "I have been a faithful servant to the throne from my youth upwards," said he, "and now I am degraded in my old age. I care not for wealth, I care not for life, but let me not be deprived of that honour which God has bestowed upon me!"

The caliph was still more exasperated at his repining, and stripped him of his commands; confiscated his effects; fined him two hundred thousand pesants of gold, and ordered that he should be scourged and exposed to the noontide sun, and afterwards thrown into prison.* The populace also reviled

* Conde, p. 1, c. 17.

and scoffed at him in his misery, and as they beheld him led forth to the public gaze, and fainting in the sun, they pointed at him with derision and exclaimed—"Behold the envious man and the impostor; this is he who pretended to have conquered the land of the unbelievers!"

CHAPTER XV.

CONDUCT OF ABDALASIS AS EMIR OF SPAIN.

WHILE these events were happening in Syria, the youthful Abdalasis, the son of Muza, remained as emir or governor of Spain. He was of a generous and benignant disposition, but he was open and confiding, and easily led away by the opinions of those he loved. Fortunately his father had left with him, as a bosom counsellor, the discreet Ayub, the nephew of Muza; aided by his advice, he for some time administered the public affairs prudently and prosperously.

Not long after the departure of his father, he received a letter from him, written while on his journey to Syria; it was to the following purport:

"Beloved son; honour of thy lineage; Allah guard thee from all harm and peril! Listen to the words of thy father. Avoid all treachery though it should promise great advantage, and trust not in him who counsels it, even though he should be a brother. The company of traitors put far from thee; for how canst thou be certain that he who has proved false to others will prove true to thee? Beware, O my son, of the seductions of love. It is an idle passion which enfeebles the heart and blinds the judgment; it renders the mighty weak, and makes slaves of princes. If thou shouldst discover any foible of a vicious kind springing up in thy nature, pluck it forth, whatever pang it cost thee. Every error, while new, may easily be weeded out, but if suffered to take root, it flourishes and bears seed, and produces fruit an hundred-fold. Follow these counsels, O son of my affections, and thou shalt live secure."

Abdalasis meditated upon this letter, for some part of it seemed to contain a mystery which he could not comprehend. He called to him his cousin and counsellor, the discreet Ayub.

"What means my father," said he, "in cautioning me against treachery and treason? Does he think my nature so base that it could descend to such means?"

Ayub read the letter attentively, "Thy father," said he, "would put thee on thy guard against the traitors Julian and Oppas, and those of their party who surround thee. What love canst thou expect from men who have been unnatural to their kindred, and what loyalty from wretches who have betrayed their country?"

Abdalasis was satisfied with the interpretation, and he acted accordingly. He had long loathed all communion with these men, for there is nothing which the open ingenuous nature so much abhors as duplicity and treason. Policy, too, no longer required their agency; they had rendered their infamous service, and had no longer a country to betray; but they might turn and betray their employers. Abdalasis, therefore, removed them to a distance from his court, and placed them in situations where they could do no harm, and he warned his commanders from being in any wise influenced by their counsels, or aided by their arms.

He now confided entirely in his Arabian troops, and in the Moorish squadrons from Africa, and with their aid he completed the conquest of Lusitania to the ultimate parts of the Algarbe, or west, even to the shores of the great Ocean sea.* From hence he sent his generals to overrun all those vast and rugged sierras, which rise like ramparts along the ocean borders of the peninsula; and they carried the standard of Islam in triumph even to the mountains of Biscay, collecting all manner of precious spoil.

"It is not enough, O Abdalasis," said Ayub, "that we conquer and rule this country with the sword; if we wish our dominion to be secure, we must cultivate the arts of peace, and study to secure the confidence and promote the welfare of the people we have conquered." Abdalasis relished counsel which accorded so well with his own beneficent nature. He endeavoured, therefore, to allay the ferment and confusion of the conquest; forbade, under rigorous punishment, all wanton spoil or oppression, and protected the native inhabitants in the enjoyment and cultivation of their lands, and the pursuit

* Algarbe, or Algarbia, in Arabic signifies the west, as Axarkia is the east, Algulia the north, and Aquibla the south. This will serve to explain some of the geographical names on the peninsula, which are of Arabian origin.

of all useful occupations. By the advice of Ayub, also, he encouraged great numbers of industrious Moors and Arabs to emigrate from Africa, and gave them houses and lands; thus introducing a peaceful Mahometan population into the conquered provinces.

The good effect of the counsels of Ayub were soon apparent. Instead of a sudden but transient influx of wealth, made by the ruin of the land, which left the country desolate, a regular and permanent revenue sprang up, produced by reviving prosperity, and gathered without violence. Abdalasis ordered it to be faithfully collected, and deposited in coffers by public officers appointed in each province for the purpose; and the whole was sent by ten deputies to Damascus to be laid at the feet of the caliph; not as the spoils of a vanquished country, but as the peaceful trophies of a wisely administered government.

The common herd of warlike adventurers, the mere men of the sword, who had thronged to Spain for the purpose of ravage and rapine, were disappointed at being thus checked in their career, and at seeing the reign of terror and violence drawing to a close. What manner of leader is this, said they, who forbids us to make spoil of the enemies of Islam, and to enjoy the land we have wrested from the unbelievers? The partisans of Julian, also, whispered their calumnies. "Behold," said they, "with what kindness he treats the enemies of your faith; all the Christians who have borne arms against you, and withstood your entrance into the land, are favoured and protected; but it is enough for a Christian to have befriended the cause of the Moslems to be singled out by Abdalasis for persecution, and to be driven with scorn from his presence."

These insinuations fermented the discontent of the turbulent and rapacious among the Moslems, but all the friends of peace and order and good government applauded the moderation of the youthful emir.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOVES OF ABDALASIS AND EXILONA.

ABDALASIS had fixed his seat of government at Seville, as permitting easy and frequent communications with the coast

of Africa. His palace was of noble architecture, with delightful gardens extending to the banks of the Guadalquivir. In a part of this palace resided many of the most beautiful Christian females, who were detained as captives, or rather hostages, to insure the tranquillity of the country. Those who were of noble rank were entertained in luxury and magnificence; slaves were appointed to attend upon them, and they were arrayed in the richest apparel and decorated with the most precious jewels. Those of tender age were taught all graceful accomplishments; and even where tasks were imposed, they were of the most elegant and agreeable kind. They embroidered, they sang, they danced, and passed their times in pleasing revelry. Many were lulled by this easy and voluptuous existence; the scenes of horror through which they had passed were gradually effaced from their minds, and a desire was often awakened of rendering themselves pleasing in the eyes of their conquerors.

After his return from his campaign in Lusitania, and during the intervals of public duty, Abdalasis solaced himself in the repose of this palace, and in the society of these Christian captives. He remarked one among them who ever sat apart, and neither joined in the labours nor sports of her companions. She was lofty in her demeanour, and the others always paid her reverence; yet sorrow had given a softness to her charms, and rendered her beauty touching to the heart. Abdalasis found her one day in the garden with her companions; they had adorned their heads with flowers, and were singing the songs of their country, but she sat by herself and wept. The youthful emir was moved by her tears, and accosted her in gentle accents. "O fairest of women!" said he, "why dost thou weep, and why is thy heart troubled?" "Alas!" replied she, "have I not cause to weep, seeing how sad is my condition, and how great the height from which I have fallen? In me you behold the wretched Exilona, but lately the wife of Roderick, and the queen of Spain, now a captive and a slave!" and, having said these words, cast her eyes upon the earth, and her tears began to flow afresh.

The generous feelings of Abdalasis were aroused at the sight of beauty and royalty in tears. He gave orders that Exilona should be entertained in a style befitting her former rank; he appointed a train of female attendants to wait upon her, and a guard of honour to protect her from all intrusion. All the time that he could spare from public concerns was passed in her

society; and he even neglected his divan, and suffered his counsellors to attend in vain, while he lingered in the apartments and gardens of the palace, listening to the voice of Exilona.

The discreet Ayub saw the danger into which he was falling. "O Abdalasis," said he, "remember the words of thy father. 'Beware, my son,' said he, 'of the seductions of love. It renders the mighty weak, and makes slaves of princes!'" A blush kindled on the cheek of Abdalasis, and he was silent for a moment. "Why," said he, at length, "do you seek to charge me with such weakness? It is one thing to be infatuated by the charms of a woman, and another to be touched by her misfortunes. It is the duty of my station to console a princess who has been reduced to the lowest humiliation by the triumphs of our arms. In doing so I do but listen to the dictates of true magnanimity."

Ayub was silent, but his brow was clouded, and for once Abdalasis parted in discontent from his counsellor. In proportion as he was dissatisfied with others or with himself, he sought the society of Exilona, for there was a charm in her conversation that banished every care. He daily became more and more enamoured, and Exilona gradually ceased to weep, and began to listen with secret pleasure to the words of her Arab lover. When, however, he sought to urge his passion, she recollected the light estimation in which her sex was held by the followers of Mahomet, and assumed a countenance grave and severe.

"Fortune," said she, "has cast me at thy feet; behold I am thy captive and thy spoil. But though my person is in thy power, my soul is unsubdued; and know that, should I lack force to defend my honour, I have resolution to wash out all stain upon it with my blood. I trust, however, in thy courtesy as a cavalier to respect me in my reverses, remembering what I have been, and that though the crown has been wrested from my brow, the royal blood still warms within my veins." *

The lofty spirit of Exilona, and her proud repulse, served but to increase the passion of Abdalasis. He besought her to unite her destiny with his, and share his state and power, promising that she should have no rival nor copartner in his heart. Whatever scruples the captive queen might originally have felt to a union with one of the conquerors of her lord, and an enemy

* Fazardo. corona, Gothica, T. 1, p. 492. Joan. Mar. de reb. Hisp. L. 6, c. 27.

of her adopted faith, they were easily vanquished, and she became the bride of Abdalasis. He would fain have persuaded her to return to the faith of her fathers; but though of Moorish origin, and brought up in the doctrines of Islam, she was too thorough a convert to Christianity to consent, and looked back with disgust upon a religion that admitted a plurality of wives.

When the sage Ayub heard of the resolution of Abdalasis to espouse Exilona he was in despair. "Alas, my cousin!" said he, "what infatuation possesses thee? Hast thou then entirely forgotten the letter of thy father? 'Beware, my son,' said he, 'of love; it is an idle passion, which enfeebles the heart and blinds the judgment.'" But Abdalasis interrupted him with impatience. "My father," said he, "spake but of the blandishments of wanton love; against these I am secured by my virtuous passion for Exilona."

Ayub would fain have impressed upon him the dangers he ran of awakening suspicion in the caliph, and discontent among the Moslems, by wedding the queen of the conquered Roderick, and one who was an enemy to the religion of Mahomet; but the youthful lover only listened to his passion. Their nuptials were celebrated at Seville with great pomp and rejoicings, and he gave his bride the name of Omalisam; that is to say, she of the precious jewels:* but she continued to be known among the Christians by the name of Exilona.

CHAPTER XVII.

FATE OF ABDALASIS AND EXILONA—DEATH OF MUZA.

POSSESSION, instead of cooling the passion of Abdalasis, only added to its force; he became blindly enamoured of his beautiful bride, and consulted her will in all things; nay, having lost all relish for the advice of the discreet Ayub, he was even guided by the counsels of his wife in the affairs of government. Exilona, unfortunately, had once been a queen, and she could not remember her regal glories without regret. She saw that Abdalasis had great power in the land; greater even than had been possessed by the Gothic kings; but she considered it as wanting in true splendour until his brows should be encircled

† Conde, p. 1, c. 17.

with the outward badge of royalty. One day, when they were alone in the palace of Seville, and the heart of Abdalasis was given up to tenderness, she addressed him in fond yet timid accents. "Will not my lord be offended," said she, "if I make an unwelcome request?" Abdalasis regarded her with a smile. "What canst thou ask of me, Exilona," said he, "that it would not be a happiness for me to grant?" Then Exilona produced a crown of gold, sparkling with jewels, which had belonged to the king, Don Roderick, and said, "Behold, thou art king in authority, be so in thy outward state. There is majesty and glory in a crown; it gives a sanctity to power." Then putting the crown upon his head, she held a mirror before him that he might behold the majesty of his appearance. Abdalasis chid her fondly, and put the crown away from him, but Exilona persisted in her prayer. "Never," said she, "has there been a king in Spain that did not wear a crown." So Abdalasis suffered himself to be beguiled by the blandishments of his wife, and to be invested with the crown and sceptre and other signs of royalty.*

It is affirmed by ancient and discreet chroniclers, that Abdalasis only assumed this royal state in the privacy of his palace, and to gratify the eye of his youthful bride; but where was a secret ever confined within the walls of a palace? The assumption of the insignia of the ancient Gothic kings was soon rumoured about, and caused the most violent suspicions. The Moslems had already felt jealous of the ascendancy of this beautiful woman, and it was now confidently asserted that Abdalasis, won by her persuasions, had secretly turned Christian.

The enemies of Abdalasis, those whose rapacious spirits had been kept in check by the beneficence of his rule, seized upon this occasion to ruin him. They sent letters to Damascus accusing him of apostasy, and of an intention to seize upon the throne in right of his wife, Exilona, as widow of the late King Roderick. It was added, that the Christians were prepared to flock to his standard as the only means of regaining ascendancy in their country.

These accusations arrived at Damascus just after the accession of the sanguinary Suleiman to the throne, and in the height of his persecution of the unfortunate Muza. The caliph

* Cron. gen. de Alonzo el Sabio, p. 3. Joan. Mar. de reb. Hisp. lib. 6, c. 27. Conde, p. 1, c. 19.

waited for no proofs in confirmation; he immediately sent private orders that Abdalasis should be put to death, and that the same fate should be dealt to his two brothers who governed in Africa as a sure means of crushing the conspiracy of this ambitious family.

The mandate for the death of Abdalasis was sent to Abhilbar ben Obeidah and Zeyd ben Nabegat, both of whom had been cherished friends of Muza, and had lived in intimate favour and companionship with his son. When they read the fatal parchment, the scroll fell from their trembling hands. "Can such hostility exist against the family of Muza?" exclaimed they. "Is this the reward for such great and glorious services?" The cavaliers remained for some time plunged in horror and consternation. The order, however, was absolute, and left them no discretion. "Allah is great," said they, "and commands us to obey our sovereign." So they prepared to execute the bloody mandate with the blind fidelity of Moslems.

It was necessary to proceed with caution. The open and magnanimous character of Abdalasis had won the hearts of a great part of the soldiery, and his magnificence pleased the cavaliers who formed his guard; it was feared, therefore, that a sanguinary opposition would be made to any attempt upon his person. The rabble, however, had been imbittered against him from his having restrained their depredations, and because they thought him an apostate in his heart, secretly bent upon betraying them to the Christians. While, therefore, the two officers made vigilant dispositions to check any movement on the part of the soldiery, they let loose the blind fury of the populace by publishing the fatal mandate. In a moment the city was in a ferment, and there was a ferocious emulation who should be first to execute the orders of the caliph.

Abdalasis was at this time at a palace in the country not far from Seville, commanding a delightful view of the fertile plain of the Guadalquivir. Hither he was accustomed to retire from the tumult of the court, and to pass his time among groves and fountains and the sweet repose of gardens, in the society of Exilona. It was the dawn of day, the hour of early prayer, when the furious populace arrived at this retreat. Abdalasis was offering up his orisons in a small mosque which he had erected for the use of the neighbouring peasantry. Exilona was in a chapel in the interior of the palace, where her confessor, a holy friar, was performing mass. They were both surprised at their devotions, and dragged forth by the hands

of the rabble. A few guards, who attended at the palace, would have made defence, but they were overawed by the sight of the written mandate of the caliph.

The captives were borne in triumph to Seville. All the beneficent virtues of Abdalasis were forgotten; nor had the charms of Exilona any effect in softening the hearts of the populace. The brutal eagerness to shed blood, which seems inherent in human nature, was awakened, and woe to the victims when that eagerness is quickened by religious hate. The illustrious couple, adorned with all the grace of youth and beauty, were hurried to a scaffold in the great square of Seville, and there beheaded amidst the shouts and execrations of an infatuated multitude. Their bodies were left exposed upon the ground, and would have been devoured by dogs, had they not been gathered at night by some friendly hand, and poorly interred in one of the courts of their late dwelling.

Thus terminated the loves and lives of Abdalasis and Exilona, in the year of the incarnation seven hundred and fourteen. Their names were held sacred as martyrs to the Christian faith; but many read in their untimely fate a lesson against ambition and vain-glory; having sacrificed real power and substantial rule to the glittering bauble of a crown.

The head of Abdalasis was embalmed and enclosed in a casket, and sent to Syria to the cruel Suleiman. The messenger who bore it overtook the caliph as he was performing a pilgrimage to Mecca. Muza was among the courtiers in his train, having been released from prison. On opening the casket and regarding its contents, the eyes of the tyrant sparkled with malignant satisfaction. Calling the unhappy father to his side: "Muza," said he, "dost thou know this head?" The veteran recognized the features of his beloved son, and turned his face away with anguish. "Yes! well do I know it," replied he; "and may the curse of God light upon him who has destroyed a better man than himself!"

Without adding another word, he retired to Mount Deran, a prey to devouring melancholy. He shortly after received tidings of the death of his two sons whom he had left in the government of western Africa, and who had fallen victims to the jealous suspicions of the caliph. His advanced age was not proof against these repeated blows, and this utter ruin of his late prosperous family, and he sank into his grave sorrowing and broken-hearted.

Such was the lamentable end of the conqueror of Spain; whose great achievements were not sufficient to atone, in the eye of his sovereign, for a weakness to which all men ambitious of renown are subject; and whose triumphs eventually brought persecution upon himself, and untimely death upon his children.

Here ends the legend of the Subjugation of Spain.

LEGEND OF COUNT JULIAN AND HIS FAMILY.

IN the preceding legends is darkly shadowed out a true story of the woes of Spain. It is a story full of wholesome admonition, rebuking the insolence of human pride and the vanity of human ambition, and showing the futility of all greatness that is not strongly based on virtue. We have seen, in brief space of time, most of the actors in this historic drama disappearing, one by one, from the scene, and going down, conqueror and conquered, to gloomy and unhonoured graves. It remains to close this eventful history by holding up, as a signal warning, the fate of the traitor whose perfidious scheme of vengeance brought ruin on his native land.

Many and various are the accounts given in ancient chronicles of the fortunes of Count Julian and his family, and many are the traditions on the subject still extant among the populace of Spain, and perpetuated in those countless ballads sung by peasants and muleteers, which spread a singular charm over the whole of this romantic land.

He who has travelled in Spain in the true way in which the country ought to be travelled; sojourning in its remote provinces; rambling among the rugged defiles and secluded valleys of its mountains; and making himself familiar with the people in their out-of-the-way hamlets and rarely-visited neighbourhoods, will remember many a group of travellers and muleteers, gathered of an evening around the door or the spacious hearth of a mountain venta, wrapped in their brown cloaks, and listening with grave and profound attention to the long historic ballad of some rustic troubadour, either recited with the true *ore rotundo* and modulated cadences of Spanish elocution, or chaunted to the tinkling of a guitar. In this way he may have heard the doleful end of Count Julian and his family recounted in traditionary rhymes, that have been handed down from generation to generation. The particulars, however, of the following wild legend are chiefly gathered

from the writings of the pseudo Moor, Rasis; how far they may be safely taken as historic facts it is impossible now to ascertain; we must content ourselves, therefore, with their answering to the exactions of poetic justice.

As yet every thing had prospered with Count Julian. He had gratified his vengeance; he had been successful in his treason, and had acquired countless riches from the ruin of his country. But it is not outward success that constitutes prosperity. The tree flourishes with fruit and foliage while blasted and withering at the heart. Wherever he went, Count Julian read hatred in every eye. The Christians cursed him as the cause of all their woe; the Moslems despised and distrusted him as a traitor. Men whispered together as he approached, and then turned away in scorn; and mothers snatched away their children with horror if he offered to caress them. He withered under the execration of his fellow-men, and last, and worst of all, he began to loathe himself. He tried in vain to persuade himself that he had but taken a justifiable vengeance; he felt that no personal wrong can justify the crime of treason to one's country.

For a time, he sought in luxurious indulgence to soothe or forget the miseries of the mind. He assembled round him every pleasure and gratification that boundless wealth could purchase, but all in vain. He had no relish for the dainties of his board; music had no charm wherewith to lull his soul, and remorse drove slumber from his pillow. He sent to Ceuta for his wife Frandina, his daughter Florinda, and his youthful son Alarbot; hoping in the bosom of his family to find that sympathy and kindness which he could no longer meet with in the world. Their presence, however, brought him no alleviation. Florinda, the daughter of his heart, for whose sake he had undertaken this signal vengeance, was sinking a victim to its effects. Wherever she went, she found herself a by-word of shame and reproach. The outrage she had suffered was imputed to her as wantonness, and her calamity was magnified into a crime. The Christians never mentioned her name without a curse, and the Moslems, the gainers by her misfortune, spake of her only by the appellation of Cava, the vilest epithet they could apply to woman.

But the opprobrium of the world was nothing to the upbraiding of her own heart. She charged herself with all the miseries of these disastrous wars; the deaths of so many gallant cavaliers; the conquest and perdition of her country. The

anguish of her mind preyed upon the beauty of her person. Her eye, once soft and tender in its expression, became wild and haggard; her cheek lost its bloom, and became hollow and pallid, and at times there was desperation in her words. When her father sought to embrace her she withdrew with shuddering from his arms, for she thought of his treason and the ruin it had brought upon Spain. Her wretchedness increased after her return to her native country, until it rose to a degree of frenzy. One day when she was walking with her parents in the garden of their palace, she entered a tower, and, having barred the door, ascended to the battlements. From thence she called to them in piercing accents, expressive of her insupportable anguish and desperate determination. "Let this city," said she, "be henceforth called Malacca, in memorial of the most wretched of women, who therein put an end to her days." So saying, she threw herself headlong from the tower and was dashed to pieces. The city, adds the ancient chronicler, received the name thus given it, though afterwards softened to Malaga, which it still retains in memory of the tragical end of Florinda.

The Countess Frandina abandoned this scene of woe, and returned to Ceuta, accompanied by her infant son. She took with her the remains of her unfortunate daughter, and gave them honourable sepulture in a mausoleum of the chapel belonging to the citadel. Count Julian departed for Carthage, where he remained plunged in horror at this doleful event.

About this time, the cruel Suleiman, having destroyed the family of Muza, had sent an Arab general, named Alahor, to succeed Abdalasis as emir or governor of Spain. The new emir was of a cruel and suspicious nature, and commenced his sway with a stern severity that soon made those under his command look back with regret to the easy rule of Abdalasis. He regarded with an eye of distrust the renegado Christians who had aided in the conquest, and who bore arms in the service of the Moslems; but his deepest suspicions fell upon Count Julian. "He has been a traitor to his own countrymen," said he; "how can we be sure that he will not prove traitor to us?"

A sudden insurrection of the Christians who had taken refuge in the Asturian mountains, quickened his suspicions, and inspired him with fears of some dangerous conspiracy against his power. In the height of his anxiety, he bethought him of an Arabian sage named Yuza, who had accompanied him from Africa. This son of science was withered in form, and looked

as if he had outlived the usual term of mortal life. In the course of his studies and travels in the east, he had collected the knowledge and experience of ages; being skilled in astrology, and, it is said, in necromancy, and possessing the marvellous gift of prophecy or divination. To this expounder of mysteries Alahor applied to learn whether any secret treason menaced his safety.

The astrologer listened with deep attention, and overwhelming brow, to all the surmises and suspicions of the emir, then shut himself up to consult his books and commune with those supernatural intelligences subservient to his wisdom. At an appointed hour the emir sought him in his cell. It was filled with the smoke of perfumes; squares and circles and various diagrams were described upon the floor, and the astrologer was poring over a scroll of parchment, covered with cabalistic characters. He received Alahor with a gloomy and sinister aspect; pretending to have discovered fearful portents in the heavens, and to have had strange dreams and mystic visions.

"O emir," said he, "be on your guard! treason is around you and in your path; your life is in peril. Beware of Count Julian and his family."

"Enough," said the emir. "They shall all die! Parents and children—all shall die!"

He forthwith sent a summons to Count Julian to attend him in Cordova. The messenger found him plunged in affliction for the recent death of his daughter. The count excused himself, on account of this misfortune, from obeying the commands of the emir in person, but sent several of his adherents. His hesitation, and the circumstance of his having sent his family across the straits to Africa, were construed by the jealous mind of the emir into proofs of guilt. He no longer doubted his being concerned in the recent insurrections, and that he had sent his family away, preparatory to an attempt, by force of arms, to subvert the Moslem domination. In his fury he put to death Siseburto and Evan, the nephews of Bishop Oppas and sons of the former king, Witiza, suspecting them of taking part in the treason. Thus did they expiate their treachery to their country in the fatal battle of the Guadalete.

Alahor next hastened to Carthagenà to seize upon Count Julian. So rapid were his movements that the count had barely time to escape with fifteen cavaliers, with whom he took refuge in the strong castle of Marcuello, among the mountains of Arragon. The emir, enraged to be disappointed of his

prey, embarked at Carthagena and crossed the straits to Ceuta, to make captives of the Countess Frandina and her son.

The old chronicle from which we take this part of our legend, presents a gloomy picture of the countess in the stern fortress to which she had fled for refuge; a picture heightened by supernatural horrors. These latter, the sagacious reader will admit or reject according to the measure of his faith and judgment; always remembering that in dark and eventful times, like those in question, involving the destinies of nations, the downfall of kingdoms, and the crimes of rulers and mighty men, the hand of fate is sometimes strangely visible, and confounds the wisdom of the worldly wise, by intimations and portents above the ordinary course of things. With this proviso, we make no scruple to follow the venerable chronicler in his narration.

Now so it happened, that the Countess Frandina was seated late at night in her chamber in the citadel of Ceuta, which stands on a lofty rock, overlooking the sea. She was revolving in gloomy thought the late disasters of her family, when she heard a mournful noise like that of the sea breeze moaning about the castle walls. Raising her eyes, she beheld her brother, the Bishop Oppas, at the entrance of the chamber. She advanced to embrace him, but he forbade her with a motion of his hand, and she observed that he was ghastly pale, and that his eyes glared as with lambent flames.

"Touch me not, sister," said he, with a mournful voice, "lest thou be consumed by the fire which rages within me. Guard well thy son, for blood-hounds are upon his track. His innocence might have secured him the protection of Heaven, but our crimes have involved him in our common ruin." He ceased to speak and was no longer to be seen. His coming and going were alike without noise, and the door of the chamber remained fast bolted.

On the following morning a messenger arrived with tidings that the Bishop Oppas had been made prisoner in battle by the insurgent Christians of the Asturias, and had died in fetters in a tower of the mountains. The same messenger brought word that the Amir Alahor had put to death several of the friends of Count Julian; had obliged him to fly for his life to a castle in Arragon, and was embarking with a formidable force for Ceuta.

The Countess Frandina, as has already been shown, was of courageous heart, and danger made her desperate. There were fifty Moorish soldiers in the garrison; she feared that they

would prove treacherous, and take part with their countrymen. Summoning her officers, therefore, she informed them of their danger, and commanded them to put those Moors to death. The guards sallied forth to obey her orders. Thirty-five of the Moors were in the great square, unsuspecting of any danger, when they were severally singled out by their executioners, and, at a concerted signal, killed on the spot. The remaining fifteen took refuge in a tower. They saw the armada of the emir at a distance, and hoped to be able to hold out until its arrival. The soldiers of the countess saw it also, and made extraordinary efforts to destroy these internal enemies before they should be attacked from without. They made repeated attempts to storm the tower, but were as often repulsed with severe loss. They then undermined it, supporting its foundations by stanchions of wood. To these they set fire and withdrew to a distance, keeping up a constant shower of missiles to prevent the Moors from sallying forth to extinguish the flames. The stanchions were rapidly consumed, and when they gave way the tower fell to the ground. Some of the Moors were crushed among the ruins; others were flung to a distance and dashed among the rocks; those who survived were instantly put to the sword.

The fleet of the emir arrived at Ceuta about the hour of vespers. He landed, but found the gates closed against him. The countess herself spoke to him from a tower, and set him at defiance. The emir immediately laid siege to the city. He consulted the astrologer Yuza, who told him that for seven days his star would have the ascendant over that of the youth Alarbot, but after that time the youth would be safe from his power, and would effect his ruin.

Alahor immediately ordered the city to be assailed on every side, and at length carried it by storm. The countess took refuge with her forces in the citadel, and made desperate defence; but the walls were sapped and mined, and she saw that all resistance would soon be unavailing. Her only thoughts now were to conceal her child. "Surely," said she, "they will not think of seeking him among the dead." She led him therefore into the dark and dismal chapel. "Thou art not afraid to be alone in this darkness, my child?" said she.

"No, mother," replied the boy; "darkness gives silence and sleep." She conducted him to the tomb of Florinda. "Fearest thou the dead, my child?" "No, mother; the dead can do no harm, and what should I fear from my sister?"

The countess opened the sepulchre. "Listen, my son," said she. "There are fierce and cruel people who have come hither to murder thee. Stay here in company with thy sister, and be quiet as thou dost value thy life!" The boy, who was of a courageous nature, did as he was bidden, and remained there all that day, and all the night, and the next day until the third hour.

In the meantime the walls of the citadel were sapped, the troops of the emir poured in at the breach, and a great part of the garrison was put to the sword. The countess was taken prisoner and brought before the emir. She appeared in his presence with a haughty demeanour, as if she had been a queen receiving homage; but when he demanded her son, she faltered and turned pale, and replied, "My son is with the dead."

"Countess," said the emir, "I am not to be deceived; tell me where you have concealed the boy, or tortures shall wring from you the secret."

"Emir," replied the countess, "may the greatest torments be my portion, both here and hereafter, if what I speak be not the truth. My darling child lies buried with the dead."

The emir was confounded by the solemnity of her words; but the withered astrologer Yuza, who stood by his side regarding the countess from beneath his bushy eyebrows, perceived trouble in her countenance and equivocation in her words. "Leave this matter to me," whispered he to Alahor. "I will produce the child."

He ordered strict search to be made by the soldiery, and he obliged the countess to be always present. When they came to the chapel, her cheek turned pale and her lip quivered. "This," said the subtle astrologer, "is the place of concealment!"

The search throughout the chapel, however, was equally vain, and the soldiers were about to depart, when Yuza remarked a slight gleam of joy in the eye of the countess. "We are leaving our prey behind," thought he; "the countess is exulting."

He now called to mind the words of her asseveration, that her child was with the dead. Turning suddenly to the soldiers he ordered them to search the sepulchres. "If you find him not," said he, "drag forth the bones of that wanton Cava, that they may be burnt, and the ashes scattered to the winds."

The soldiers searched among the tombs and found that of Florinda partly open. Within lay the boy in the sound sleep of childhood, and one of the soldiers took him gently in his arms to bear him to the emir.

When the countess beheld that her child was discovered, she rushed into the presence of Alahor, and, forgetting all her pride, threw herself upon her knees before him.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried she in piercing accents, "mercy on my son—my only child! O emir! listen to a mother's prayer, and my lips shall kiss thy feet. As thou art merciful to him, so may the most high God have mercy upon thee, and heap blessings on thy head."

"Bear that frantic woman hence," said the emir, "but guard her well."

The countess was dragged away by the soldiery without regard to her struggles and her cries, and confined in a dungeon of the citadel.

The child was now brought to the emir. He had been awakened by the tumult, but gazed fearlessly on the stern countenances of the soldiers. Had the heart of the emir been capable of pity, it would have been touched by the tender youth and innocent beauty of the child; but his heart was as the nether millstone, and he was bent upon the destruction of the whole family of Julian. Calling to him the astrologer, he gave the child into his charge with a secret command. The withered son of the desert took the boy by the hand, and led him up the winding staircase of a tower. When they reached the summit Yuza placed him on the battlements.

"Cling not to me, my child," said he; "there is no danger."

"Father, I fear not," said the undaunted boy; "yet it is a wondrous height!"

The child looked around with delighted eyes. The breeze blew his curling locks from about his face, and his cheek glowed at the boundless prospect; for the tower was reared upon that lofty promontory on which Hercules founded one of his pillars. The surges of the sea were heard far below, beating upon the rocks, the sea-gull screamed and wheeled about the foundations of the tower, and the sails of lofty caraccas were as mere specks on the bosom of the deep.

"Dost thou know yonder land beyond the blue water?" said Yuza.

"It is Spain," replied the boy; "it is the land of my father and my mother."

"Then stretch forth thy hands and bless it, my child," said the astrologer.

The boy let go his hold of the wall, and, as he stretched forth his hands, the aged son of Ishmael, exerting all the strength of his withered limbs, suddenly pushed him over the battlements. He fell headlong from the top of that tall tower, and not a bone in his tender frame but was crushed upon the rocks beneath.

Alahor came to the foot of the winding stair.

"Is the boy safe?" cried he.

"He is safe," replied Yuza; "come and behold the truth with thine own eyes."

The emir ascended the tower and looked over the battlements, and beheld the body of the child, a shapeless mass, on the rocks far below, and the sea-gulls hovering about; and he gave orders that it should be thrown into the sea, which was done.

On the following morning, the countess was led forth from her dungeon into the public square. She knew of the death of her child, and that her own death was at hand, but she neither wept nor supplicated. Her hair was dishevelled, her eyes were haggard with watching, and her cheek was as the monumental stone, but there were the remains of commanding beauty in her countenance, and the majesty of her presence awed even the rabble into respect.

A multitude of Christian prisoners were then brought forth; and Alahor cried out—"Behold the wife of Count Julian; behold one of that traitorous family which has brought ruin upon yourselves and upon your country." And he ordered that they should stone her to death. But the Christians drew back with horror from the deed, and said—"In the hand of God is vengeance; let not her blood be upon our heads." Upon this the emir swore with horrid imprecations that whoever of the captives refused should himself be stoned to death. So the cruel order was executed, and the Countess Frandina perished by the hands of her countrymen. Having thus accomplished his barbarous errand, the emir embarked for Spain, and ordered the citadel of Ceuta to be set on fire, and crossed the straits at night by the light of its towering flames.

The death of Count Julian, which took place not long after, closed the tragic story of his family. How he died remains involved in doubt. Some assert that the cruel Alahor pursued him to his retreat among the mountains, and, having taken

him prisoner, beheaded him; others that the Moors confined him in a dungeon, and put an end to his life with lingering torments; while others affirm that the tower of the castle of Marcuello, near Huesca, in Arragon, in which he took refuge, fell on him and crushed him to pieces. All agree that his latter end was miserable in the extreme, and his death violent. The curse of heaven, which had thus pursued him to the grave, was extended to the very place which had given him shelter; for we are told that the castle is no longer inhabited on account of the strange and horrible noises that are heard in it; and that visions of armed men are seen above it in the air; which are supposed to be the troubled spirits of the apostate Christians who favoured the cause of the traitor.

In after-times a stone sepulchre was shown, outside of the chapel of the castle, as the tomb of Count Julian; but the traveller and the pilgrim avoided it, or bestowed upon it a malediction; and the name of Julian has remained a by-word and a scorn in the land for the warning of all generations. Such ever be the lot of him who betrays his country.

Here end the legends of the Conquest of Spain.

Written in the Alhambra, June 10, 1829.

NOTE TO THE PRECEDING LEGEND.

EL licenciado Ardevines (Lib. 2, c. 8) dize que dichos Duendos caseros, o los del aire, hazen aparacer exercitos y peleas, como lo que se cuenta por tradicion (y aun algunos personas lo deponen como testigos de vista) de la torre y castello de Marcuello, lugar al pie de las montañas de Aragon (aora inhabitable, por las grandes y espantables ruidos, que en el se oyen) donde se retraxo el Conde Don Julian, causa de la perdicion de España; sobre el qual castillo, deze se ven en el aire ciertas visiones, como de soldados, que el vulgo dize son los cavalleros y gente que le favorecian.

Vide "el Ente Dislucidado," por Fray Antonio de Fuentalapeña Capuchin. Seccion 3, Subseccion 5, Instancia 8, Num. 644.

As readers unversed in the Spanish language may wish to know the testimony of the worthy and discreet Capuchin friar, Antonio de Fuentalapeña, we subjoin a translation of it:—

"The licentiate Ardevines (Book II., chap. 8) says, that the

said house-fairies, (or familiar spirits,) or those of the air, cause the apparitions of armies and battles; such as those which are related in tradition, (and some persons even depose to the truth of them as eye-witnesses,) of the town and castle of Marcuello, a fortress at the foot of the mountains of Aragon, (at present uninhabitable, on account of the great and frightful noises heard in it,) the place of retreat of Count Don Julian, the cause of the perdition of Spain. It is said that certain apparitions of soldiers are seen in the air, which the vulgar say are those of the courtiers and the people who aided him."

SPANISH

VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE first discovery of the western hemisphere has already been related by the author in his History of Columbus. It is proposed by him, in the present work, to narrate the enterprises of certain of the companions and disciples of the admiral, who, enkindled by his zeal, and instructed by his example, sallied forth separately in the vast region of adventure to which he had led the way. Many of them sought merely to skirt the continent which he had partially visited, and to secure the first fruits of the pearl fisheries of Paria and Cubaga, or to explore the coast of Veragua, which he had represented as the Aurea Chersonesus of the Ancients. Others aspired to accomplish a grand discovery which he had meditated toward the close of his career. In the course of his expeditions along the coast of Terra Firma, Columbus had repeatedly received information of the existence of a vast sea to the south. He supposed it to be the great Indian Ocean, the region of the Oriental spice islands, and that it must communicate by a strait with the Caribbean Sea. His last and most disastrous voyage was made for the express purpose of discovering that imaginary strait, and making his way into this Southern Ocean. The illustrious navigator, however, was doomed to die, as it were, upon the threshold of his discoveries. It was reserved for one of his followers, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, to obtain the first view of the promised ocean, from the lofty mountains of Darien, some years after the eyes of the venerable admiral had been closed in death.

The expeditions herein narrated, therefore, may be considered as springing immediately out of the voyages of Columbus, and fulfilling some of his grand designs. They may be compared to the attempts of adventurous knights errant to achieve the enterprise left unfinished by some illustrious predecessor. Neither is this comparison entirely fanciful. On the contrary,

it is a curious fact, well worthy of notice, that the spirit of chivalry entered largely into the early expeditions of the Spanish discoverers, giving them a character wholly distinct from similar enterprises undertaken by other nations. It will not, perhaps, be considered far sought, if we trace the cause of this peculiarity to the domestic history of the Spaniards during the middle ages.

Eight centuries of incessant warfare with the Moorish usurpers of the peninsula produced a deep and lasting effect upon the Spanish character and manners. The war being ever close at home, mingled itself with the domestic habits and concerns of the Spaniard. He was born a soldier. The wild and predatory nature of the war, also, made him a kind of chivalrous marauder. His horse and weapon were always ready for the field. His delight was in roving incursions and extravagant exploits, and no gain was so glorious in his eyes as the cavalcade of spoils and captives, driven home in triumph from a plundered province. Religion, which has ever held great empire in the Spanish mind, lent its aid to sanctify these roving and ravaging propensities, and the Castilian cavalier, as he sacked the towns and laid waste the fields of his Moslem neighbour, piously believed he was doing God service.

The conquest of Granada put an end to the peninsula wars between christian and infidel; the spirit of Spanish chivalry was thus suddenly deprived of its wonted sphere of action; but it had been too long fostered and excited to be as suddenly appeased. The youth of the nation, bred up to daring adventure and heroic achievement, could not brook the tranquil and regular pursuits of common life, but panted for some new field of romantic enterprise.

It was at this juncture that the grand project of Columbus was carried into effect. His treaty with the sovereigns was, in a manner, signed with the same pen that had subscribed the capitulation of the Moorish capital, and his first expedition may almost be said to have departed from beneath the walls of Granada. Many of the youthful cavaliers who had fleshed their swords in that memorable war, crowded the ships of the discoverers, thinking a new career of arms was to be opened to them—a kind of crusade into splendid and unknown regions of infidels. The very weapons and armour that had been used against the Moors were drawn from the arsenals to equip the discoverers, and some of the most noted of the early commanders in the new world will be found to have made their first essay in arms

under the banner of Ferdinand and Isabella, in their romantic campaigns among the mountains of Andalusia.

To these circumstances may, in a great measure, be ascribed that swelling chivalrous spirit which will be found continually mingling, or rather warring, with the technical habits of the seamen, and the sordid schemes of the mercenary adventurer; in these early Spanish discoveries, chivalry had left the land and launched upon the deep. The Spanish cavalier had embarked in the Caraval of the discoverer; he carried among the trackless wildernesses of the new world, the same contempt of danger and fortitude under suffering, the same restless roaming spirit, the same passion for inroad and ravage, and vain-glorious exploit, and the same fervent, and often bigoted, zeal for the propagation of his faith that had distinguished him during his warfare with the Moors. Instances in point will be found in the extravagant career of the daring Ojeda, particularly in his adventures along the coast of Terra Firma and the wild shores of Cuba. In the sad story of the "unfortunate Nicuesa;" graced as it is with occasional touches of high-bred courtesy; in the singular cruise of that brave, but credulous, old cavalier, Juan Ponce de Leon, who fell upon the flowery coast of Florida, in his search after an imaginary fountain of youth; and above all in the chequered fortunes of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, whose discovery of the Pacific ocean, forms one of the most beautiful and striking incidents in the history of the new world, and whose fate might furnish a theme of wonderful interest for a poem or a drama.

The extraordinary actions and adventures of these men, while they rival the exploits recorded in chivalric tale, have the additional interest of verity. They leave us in admiration of the bold and heroic qualities inherent in the Spanish character, which led that nation to so high a pitch of power and glory, and which are still discernible in the great mass of that gallant people, by those who have an opportunity of judging of them rightly.

Before concluding these prefatory remarks, the author would acknowledge how much he has been indebted to the third volume of the invaluable Historical collection of Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, wherein he has exhibited his usual industry, accuracy, and critical acumen. He has likewise profited greatly by the second volume of Oviedo's general history, which only exists in manuscript, and a copy of which he found in the Columbian library of the Cathedral of Seville.

He has had some assistance also from the documents of the law-case between Don Diego Columbus and the Crown, which exist in the archives of the Indies; and for an inspection of which he is much indebted to the permission of the Spanish Government and the kind attentions of Don Josef de La Higuera Lara, the keeper of the archives. These, with the historical works of Las Casas, Herrera, Gomera, and Peter Martyr, have been his authorities for the facts contained in the following work; though he has not thought proper to refer to them continually at the bottom of his page.

While his work was going through the press he received a volume of Spanish Biography, written with great elegance and accuracy, by Don Manuel Josef Quintana, and containing a life of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. He was gratified to find that his arrangement of facts was generally corroborated by this work; though he was enabled to correct his dates in several instances, and to make a few other emendations from the volume of Señor Quintana, whose position in Spain gave him the means of attaining superior exactness on these points.

VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES

OF THE

COMPANIONS OF COLUMBUS.

To declare my opinion herein, whatsoever hath heretofore been discovered by the famous travayles of Saturnus and Hercules, with such other whom the Antiquitie for their heroical acts honoured as gods, seemeth but little and obscure, if it be compared to the victorious labors of the Spanyards.—*P. Martyr, Decad. III. c. 4. Lock's translation*

ALONZO DE OJEDA.*

*HIS FIRST VOYAGE, IN WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY
AMERIGO VESPUCCI.†*

CHAPTER I.

SOME ACCOUNT OF OJEDA—OF JUAN DE LA COSA—OF AMERIGO VESPUCCI—PREPARATIONS FOR THE VOYAGE.—(1499.)

THOSE who have read the History of Columbus will, doubtless, remember the character and exploits of Alonzo de Ojeda; as some of the readers of the following pages, however, may not have perused that work, and as it is proposed at present to trace the subsequent fortunes of this youthful adventurer, a brief sketch of him may not be deemed superfluous.

Alonzo de Ojeda was a native of Cuenca, in New Castile, and of a respectable family. He was brought up as a page or esquire, in the service of Don Luis de Cerda, Duke of Medina Celi, one of the most powerful nobles of Spain; the same who for some time patronised Columbus during his application to the Spanish court.‡

* Ojeda is pronounced in Spanish Oheda, with a strong aspiration of the *h*.

† Vespucci, Vespuchy.

‡ Varones Ilustres, por F. Pizarro y Orellana, p. 41. Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l i. c. 82.

In those warlike days, when the peninsula was distracted by contests between the christian kingdoms, by feuds between the nobles and the crown, and by the incessant and marauding warfare with the Moors, the household of a Spanish nobleman was a complete school of arms, where the youth of the country were sent to be trained up in all kinds of hardy exercises, and to be led to battle under an illustrious banner. Such was especially the case with the service of the Duke of Medina Celi, who possessed princely domains, whose household was a petty court, who led legions of armed retainers to the field, and who appeared in splendid state and with an immense retinue, more as an ally of Ferdinand and Isabella, than as a subject. He engaged in many of the roughest expeditions of the memorable war of Granada, always insisting on leading his own troops in person, when the service was of peculiar difficulty and danger. Alonzo de Ojeda was formed to signalize himself in such a school. Though small of stature, he was well made, and of wonderful force and activity, with a towering spirit and a daring eye that seemed to make up for deficiency of height. He was a bold and graceful horseman, an excellent foot soldier, dexterous with every weapon, and noted for his extraordinary skill and adroitness in all feats of strength and agility.

He must have been quite young when he followed the duke of Medina Celi, as page, to the Moorish wars; for he was but about twenty-one years of age when he accompanied Columbus in his second voyage; he had already, however, distinguished himself by his enterprising spirit and headlong valour; and his exploits during that voyage contributed to enhance his reputation. He returned to Spain with Columbus, but did not accompany him in his third voyage, in the spring of 1498. He was probably impatient of subordination, and ambitious of a separate employment or command, which the influence of his connexions gave him a great chance of obtaining. He had a cousin-german of his own name, the reverend Padre Alonzo de Ojeda, a Dominican friar, who was one of the first inquisitors of Spain, and a great favourite with the Catholic sovereigns.* This father inquisitor was, moreover, an intimate friend of the bishop Don Juan Rodriguez Fonseca, who had the chief management of the affairs of the Indies, under which general name were comprehended all the countries discovered in the new

* Pizarro. Varones Ilustres.

world. Through the good offices of his cousin inquisitor, therefore, Ojeda had been introduced to the notice of the bishop, who took him into his especial favour and patronage. Mention has already been made, in the History of Columbus, of a present made by the bishop to Ojeda of a small Flemish painting of the Holy Virgin. This the young adventurer carried about with him as a protecting relic, invoking it at all times of peril, whether by sea or land; and to the special care of the Virgin he attributed the remarkable circumstance that he had never been wounded in any of the innumerable brawls and battles into which he was continually betrayed by his rash and fiery temperament.

While Ojeda was lingering about the court, letters were received from Columbus, giving an account of the events of his third voyage, especially of his discovery of the coast of Paria, which he described as abounding with drugs and spices, with gold and silver, and precious stones, and, above all, with oriental pearls, and which he supposed to be the borders of that vast and unknown region of the East, wherein, according to certain learned theorists, was situated the terrestrial paradise. Specimens of the pearls, procured in considerable quantities from the natives, accompanied his epistle, together with charts descriptive of his route. These tidings caused a great sensation among the maritime adventurers of Spain; but no one was more excited by them than Alonzo de Ojeda, who, from his intimacy with the bishop, had full access to the charts and correspondence of Columbus. He immediately conceived the project of making a voyage in the route thus marked out by the admiral, and of seizing upon the first fruits of discovery which he had left ungathered. His scheme met with ready encouragement from Fonseca, who, as has heretofore been shown, was an implacable enemy to Columbus, and willing to promote any measure that might injure or molest him. The bishop accordingly granted a commission to Ojeda, authorizing him to fit out an armament and proceed on a voyage of discovery, with the proviso merely that he should not visit any territories appertaining to Portugal, or any of the lands discovered in the name of Spain previous to the year 1495. The latter part of this provision appears to have been craftily worded by the bishop, so as to leave the coast of Paria and its pearl fisheries open to Ojeda, they having been recently discovered by Columbus in 1498.

The commission was signed by Fonseca alone, in virtue of

general powers vested in him for such purposes, but the signature of the sovereigns did not appear on the instrument, and it is doubtful whether their sanction was sought on the occasion. He knew that Columbus had recently remonstrated against a royal mandate issued in 1495, permitting voyages of discovery, by private adventurers, and that the sovereigns had in consequence revoked their mandate wherever it might be deemed prejudicial to the stipulated privileges of the admiral.* It is probable, therefore, that the bishop avoided raising any question that might impede the enterprise; being confident of the ultimate approbation of Ferdinand, who would be well pleased to have his dominions in the new world extended by the discoveries of private adventurers, undertaken at their own expense. It was stipulated in this, as well as in subsequent licenses for private expeditions, that a certain proportion of the profits, generally a fourth or fifth, should be reserved for the crown.

Having thus obtained permission to make the voyage, the next consideration, with Ojeda was to find the means. He was a young adventurer, a mere soldier of fortune, and destitute of wealth; but he had a high reputation for courage and enterprise, and with these, it was thought, would soon make his way to the richest parts of the newly discovered lands, and have the wealth of the Indies at his disposal. He had no difficulty, therefore, in finding monied associates among the rich merchants of Seville, who, in that age of discovery, were ever ready to stake their property upon the schemes of roving navigators. With such assistance he soon equipped a squadron of four vessels at Port St. Mary, opposite Cadiz. Among the seamer who engaged with him were several who had just returned from accompanying Columbus in his voyage to this very coast of Paria. The principal associate of Ojeda, and one on whom he placed great reliance, was Juan de la Cosa; who accompanied him as first mate, or, as it was termed, chief pilot. This was a bold Biscayan, who may be regarded as a disciple of Columbus, with whom he had sailed in his second voyage, when he coasted Cuba and Jamaica, and he had since accompanied Rodrigo de Bastides, in an expedition along the coast of Terra Firma. The hardy veteran was looked up to by his contemporaries as an oracle of the seas, and was pronounced one of the most able mariners of the day; he may be excused,

* Navarrete, t. ii. Document, cxiii.

therefore, if in his harmless vanity he considered himself on a par even with Columbus.*

Another conspicuous associate of Ojeda, in this voyage, was Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine merchant, induced by broken fortunes and a rambling disposition to seek adventures in the new world. Whether he had any pecuniary interest in the expedition, and in what capacity he sailed, does not appear. His importance has entirely arisen from subsequent circumstances; from his having written and published a narrative of his voyages, and from his name having eventually been given to the new world.

CHAPTER II.

DEPARTURE FROM SPAIN—ARRIVAL ON THE COAST OF PARIA— CUSTOMS OF THE NATIONS.

OJEDA sailed from Port St. Mary on the 20th of May, 1499, and, having touched for supplies at the Canaries, took a departure from Gomara, pursuing the route of Columbus, in his third voyage, being guided by the chart he had sent home, at well as by the mariners who had accompanied him on that occasion. At the end of twenty-four days he reached the continent of the new world, about two hundred leagues farther south than the part discovered by Columbus, being, as it is supposed, the coast of Surinam.†

From hence he ran along the coast of the Gulf of Paria, passing the mouths of many rivers, but especially those of the Esquivo and the Oronoko. These, to the astonishment of the Spaniards, unaccustomed as yet to the mighty rivers of the new world, poured forth such a prodigious volume of water, as to freshen the sea for a great extent. They beheld none of the natives until they arrived at the Island of Trinidad, on which island they met with traces of the recent visit of Columbus.

Vespucci, in his letters, gives a long description of the people of this island and of the coast of Paria, who were of the Carib race, tall, well-made and vigorous, and expert with the bow, the lance, and the buckler. His description, in general, resem-

* Navarrete. Collec. Viag., t. iii., p. 4.

† Navarrete, t. iii., p. 211.

bles those which have frequently been given of the Aborigines of the new world; there are two or three particulars, however, worthy of citation.

They appeared, he said, to believe in no religious creed, to have no place of worship, and to make no prayers or sacrifices; but, he adds, from the voluptuousness of their lives, they might be considered Epicureans.* Their habitations were built in the shape of bells; of the trunks of trees, thatched with palm leaves, and were proof against wind and weather. They appeared to be in common, and some of them were of such magnitude as to contain six hundred persons: in one place there were eight principal houses capable of sheltering nearly ten thousand inhabitants. Every seven or eight years the natives were obliged to change their residence, from the maladies engendered by the heat of the climate in their crowded habitations.

Their riches consisted in beads and ornaments made from the bones of fishes; in small white and green stones strung like rosaries, with which they adorned their persons, and in the beautiful plumes of various colours for which the tropical birds are noted.

The Spaniards smiled at their simplicity in attaching an extraordinary value to such worthless trifles; while the savages, in all probability, were equally surprised at beholding the strangers so eager after gold, and pearls and precious stones, which to themselves were objects of indifference.

Their manner of treating the dead was similar to that observed among the natives of some of the islands. Having deposited the corpse in a cavern or sepulchre, they placed a jar of water and a few eatables at its head, and then abandoned it without moan or lamentation. In some parts of the coast, when a person was considered near his end, his nearest relatives bore him to the woods and laid him in a hammock suspended to the trees. They then danced round him until evening, when, having left within his reach sufficient meat and drink to sustain him for four days, they repaired to their habitations. If he recovered and returned home, he was received with much ceremony and rejoicing; if he died of his malady or of famine, nothing more was thought of him.

Their mode of treating a fever is also worthy of mention. In the height of the malady they plunged the patient in a bath

* *Viages de Vespucci. Navarrete, t. iii., p. 211.*

of the coldest water, after which they obliged him to make many evolutions round a great fire, until he was in a violent heat, when they put him to bed, that he might sleep: a treatment, adds Amerigo Vespucci, by which we saw many cured.

CHAPTER III.

COASTING OF TERRA FIRMA—MILITARY EXPEDITION OF OJEDA.

AFTER touching at various parts of Trinidad and the Gulf of Paria, Ojeda passed through the strait of the Boca del Drago, or Dragon's Mouth, which Columbus had found so formidable, and then steered his course along the coast of Terra Firma, landing occasionally until he arrived at Curiana, or the Gulf of Pearls. From hence he stood to the opposite island of Margarita, previously discovered by Columbus, and since renowned for its pearl fishery. This, as well as several adjacent islands, he visited and explored; after which he returned to the main land, and touched at Cumana and Maracapana, where he found the rivers infested with alligators resembling the crocodiles of the Nile.

Finding a convenient harbour at Maracapana he unloaded and careened his vessels there, and built a small brigantine. The natives came to him in great numbers, bringing abundance of venison, fish, and cassava bread, and aiding the seamen in their labours. Their hospitality was not certainly disinterested, for they sought to gain the protection of the Spaniards, whom they revered as superhuman beings. When they thought they had sufficiently secured their favour, they represented to Ojeda that their coast was subject to invasion from a distant island, the inhabitants of which were cannibals, and carried their people into captivity, to be devoured at their unnatural banquets. They besought Ojeda, therefore, to avenge them upon these ferocious enemies.

The request was gratifying to the fighting propensities of Alonzo de Ojeda, and to his love of adventure, and was readily granted. Taking seven of the natives on board of his vessels, therefore, as guides, he set sail in quest of the cannibals. After sailing for seven days he came to a chain of islands,

some of which were peopled, others uninhabited, and which are supposed to have been the Carribee islands. One of these was pointed out by his guides as the habitation of their foes. On running near the shore he beheld it thronged with savage warriors, decorated with coronets of gaudy plumes, their bodies painted with a variety of colours. They were armed with bows and arrows, with darts, lances, and bucklers, and seemed prepared to defend their island from invasion.

This show of war was calculated to rouse the martial spirit of Ojeda. He brought his ships to anchor, ordered out his boats, and provided each with a paterero or small cannon. Beside the oarsmen, each boat contained a number of soldiers, who were told to crouch out of sight in the bottom. The boats then pulled in steadily for the shore. As they approached, the Indians let fly a cloud of arrows, but without much effect. Seeing the boats continue to advance, the savages threw themselves into the sea, and brandished their lances to prevent their landing. Upon this, the soldiers sprang up in the boats and discharged the patereroes. At the sound and smoke of these unknown weapons the savages abandoned the water in affright, while Ojeda and his men leaped on shore and pursued them. The Carib warriors rallied on the banks, and fought for a long time with that courage peculiar to their race, but were at length driven to the woods, at the edge of the sword, leaving many killed and wounded on the field of battle.

On the following day the savages were seen on the shore in still greater numbers, armed and painted, and decorated with war plumes, and sounding defiance with their conchs and drums. Ojeda again landed fifty-seven men, whom he separated into four companies, and ordered them to charge the enemy from different directions. The Caribs fought for a time hand to hand, displaying great dexterity in covering themselves with their bucklers, but were at length entirely routed and driven, with great slaughter, to the forests. The Spaniards had but one man killed and twenty-one wounded in these combats,—such superior advantage did their armour give them over the naked savages. Having plundered and set fire to the houses, they returned triumphantly to their ships, with a number of Carib captives, and made sail for the main land. Ojeda bestowed a part of the spoil upon the seven Indians who had accompanied him as guides, and sent them exulting to their homes, to relate to their countrymen the signal vengeance that had been wreaked upon their foes. He

then anchored in a bay, where he remained for twenty days, until his men had recovered from their wounds.*

CHAPTER IV.

DISCOVERY OF THE GULF OF VENEZUELA—TRANSACTIONS THERE —OJEDA EXPLORES THE GULF—PENETRATES TO MARACAIBO.

HIS crew being refreshed, and the wounded sufficiently recovered, Ojeda made sail, and touched at the island of Curazao, which, according to the accounts of Vespucci, was inhabited by a race of giants, "every woman appearing a Penthesilea, and every man an Antæus."† As Vespucci was a scholar, and as he supposed himself exploring the regions of the extreme East, the ancient realm of fable, it is probable his imagination deceived him, and construed the formidable accounts given by the Indians of their cannibal neighbours of the islands, into something according with his recollections of classic fable. Certain it is, that the reports of subsequent voyagers proved the inhabitants of the island to be of the ordinary size.

Proceeding along the coast, he arrived at a vast deep gulf, resembling a tranquil lake; entering which, he beheld on the eastern side a village, the construction of which struck him with surprise. It consisted of twenty large houses, shaped like bells, and built on piles driven into the bottom of the lake, which, in this part, was limpid and of but little depth. Each house was provided with a drawbridge, and with canoes, by which the communication was carried on. From these resemblances to the Italian city, Ojeda gave to the bay the name of the Gulf of Venice: and it is called at the present day Venezuela, or Little Venice: the Indian name was Coquibacoa.

When the inhabitants beheld the ships standing into the bay, looking like wonderful and unknown apparitions from the deep, they fled with terror to their houses, and raised the drawbridges. The Spaniards remained for a time gazing with

* There is some discrepance in the early accounts of this battle, as to the time and place of its occurrence. The author has collated the narratives of Vespucci, Las Casas, Herrera, and Peter Martyr, and the evidence given in the law-suit of Diego Columbus, and has endeavoured as much as possible to reconcile them.

† Vespucci.—Letter to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medicis.

admiration at this amphibious village, when a squadron of canoes entered the harbour from the sea. On beholding the ships they paused in mute amazement, and on the Spaniards attempting to approach them, paddled swiftly to shore, and plunged into the forest. They soon returned with sixteen young girls, whom they conveyed in their canoes to the ships, distributing four on board of each, either as peace-offerings or as tokens of amity and confidence. The best of understanding now seemed to be established; and the inhabitants of the village came swarming about the ships in their canoes, and others swimming in great numbers from the shores.

The friendship of the savages, however, was all delusive. 'On a sudden, several old women at the doors of the houses uttered loud shrieks, tearing their hair in fury. It appeared to be a signal for hostility. The sixteen nymphs plunged into the sea and made for shore; the Indians in the canoes caught up their bows and discharged a flight of arrows, and even those who were swimming brandished darts and lances, which they had hitherto concealed beneath the water.

Ojeda was for a moment surprised at seeing war thus starting up on every side, and the very sea bristling with weapons. Manning his boats, he immediately charged among the thickest of the enemy, shattered and sunk several of their canoes, killed twenty Indians and wounded many more, and spread such a panic among them, that most of the survivors flung themselves into the sea and swam to shore. Three of them were taken prisoners, and two of the fugitive girls, and were conveyed on board of the ships, where the men were put in irons. One of them, however, and the two girls, succeeded in dexterously escaping the same night.

Ojeda had but five men wounded in the affray, all of whom recovered. He visited the houses, but found them abandoned and destitute of booty; notwithstanding the unprovoked hostility of the inhabitants, he spared the buildings, that he might not cause useless irritation along the coast.

Continuing to explore this gulf, Ojeda penetrated to a port or harbour, to which he gave the name of St. Bartholomew, but which is supposed to be the same at present known by the original Indian name of Maracaibo. Here, in compliance with the entreaties of the natives, he sent a detachment of twenty-seven Spaniards on a visit to the interior. For nine days they were conducted from town to town, and feasted and almost idolized by the Indians, who regarded them as angelic beings,

performing their national dances and games, and chaunting their traditional ballads for their entertainment.

The natives of this part were distinguished for the symmetry of their forms; the females in particular appeared to the Spaniards to surpass all others that they had yet beheld in the new world for grace and beauty; neither did the men evince, in the least degree, that jealousy which prevailed in other parts of the coast; but, on the contrary, permitted the most frank and intimate intercourse with their wives and daughters.

By the time the Spaniards set out on their return to the ship, the whole country was aroused, pouring forth its population, male and female, to do them honour. Some bore them in litters or hammocks, that they might not be fatigued with the journey, and happy was the Indian who had the honour of bearing a Spaniard on his shoulders across a river. Others loaded themselves with the presents that had been bestowed on their guests, consisting of rich plumes, weapons of various kinds, and tropical birds and animals. In this way they returned in triumphant procession to the ships, the woods and shores resounding with their songs and shouts.

Many of the Indians crowded into the boats that took the detachment to the ships; others put off in canoes, or swam from shore, so that in a little while the vessels were thronged with upwards of a thousand wondering natives. While gazing and marvelling at the strange objects around them, Ojeda ordered the cannon to be discharged, at the sound of which, says Vespucci, the Indians "plunged into the water, like so many frogs from a bank." Perceiving, however, that it was done in harmless mirth, they returned on board, and passed the rest of the day in great festivity. The Spaniards brought away with them several of the beautiful and hospitable females from this place, one of whom, named by them Isabel, was much prized by Ojeda, and accompanied him in a subsequent voyage.*

* Navarette, t. iii., p. 8. Idem, pp. 107, 108.

It is worthy of particular mention that Ojeda, in his report of his voyage to the Sovereigns, informed them of his having met with English voyagers in the vicinity of Coquibacoa, and that the Spanish government attached such importance to his information as to take measures to prevent any intrusion into those parts by the English. It is singular that no record should exist of this early and extensive expedition of English navigators. If it was undertaken in the service of the Crown, some document might be found concerning it among the archives of the reign of Henry VII. The English had already discovered the continent of North America. This had been done in 1497, by John Cabot, a Venetian, accompanied by his son

CHAPTER V.

PROSECUTION OF THE VOYAGE—RETURN TO SPAIN.

LEAVING the friendly port of Coquibacoa, Ojeda continued along the western shores of the gulf of Venezuela, and standing out to sea, and doubling Cape Maracaibo, he pursued his coasting voyage from port to port, and promontory to promontory, of this unknown continent, until he reached that long stretching headland called Cape de la Vela. There, the state of his vessels, and perhaps the disappointment of his hopes at not meeting with abundant sources of immediate wealth, induced him to abandon all further voyaging along the coast, and, changing his course, he stood across the Caribbean Sea for Hispaniola. The tenor of his commission forbade his visiting that island; but Ojeda was not a man to stand upon trifles when his interest or inclination prompted the contrary. He trusted to excuse the infraction of his orders by the alleged necessity of touching at the island to caulk and refit his vessels, and to procure provisions. His true object, however, is supposed to have been to cut dyewood, which abounds in the western part of Hispaniola.

He accordingly anchored at Yaquimo in September, and landed with a large party of his men. Columbus at that time held command of the island, and, hearing of this unlicensed intrusion, despatched Francesco Roldan, the quondam rebel, to call Ojeda to account. The contest of stratagem and management that took place between these two adroit and daring adventurers has already been detailed in the History of Columbus. Roldan was eventually successful, and Ojeda, being obliged to leave Hispaniola, resumed his rambling voyage, visiting various islands, from whence he carried off numbers of the natives. He at length arrived at Cadiz, in June, 1500, with his ships crowded with captives, whom he sold as slaves.

Sebastian, who was born in Bristol. They sailed under a license of Henry VII., who was to have a fifth of the profits of the voyage. On the 24th June they discovered Newfoundland, and afterwards coasted the continent quite to Florida, bringing back to England a valuable cargo and several of the natives. *This was the first discovery of the mainland of America.* The success of this expedition may have prompted the one which Ojeda encountered in the neighbourhood of Coquibacoa.

So meagre, however, was the result of this expedition, that we are told, when all the expenses were deducted, but five hundred ducats remained to be divided between fifty-five adventurers. What made this result the more mortifying was, that a petty armament which had sailed sometime after that of Ojeda, had returned two months before him, rich with the spoils of the New World. A brief account of this latter expedition is necessary to connect this series of minor discoveries.

PEDRO ALONZO NIÑO* AND CHRISTOVAL GUERRA.—(1499.)

THE permission granted by Bishop Fonseca to Alonzo de Ojeda, to undertake a private expedition to the New World, roused the emulation of others of the followers of Columbus. Among these was Pedro Alonzo Niño, a hardy seaman, native of Moguer in the vicinity of Palos, who had sailed with Columbus, as a pilot, in his first voyage, and also in his cruising along the coasts of Cuba and Paria.† He soon obtained from the bishop a similar license to that given to Ojeda, and, like the latter, sought for some monied confederate among the rich merchants of Seville. One of these, named Luis Guerra, offered to fit out a caravel for the expedition; but on condition that his brother, Christoval Guerra, should have the command. The poverty of Niño compelled him to assent to the stipulations of the man of wealth, and he sailed as subaltern in his own enterprise; but his nautical skill and knowledge soon gained him the ascendancy, he became virtually the captain, and ultimately enjoyed the whole credit of the voyage.

The bark of these two adventurers was but of fifty tons burthen, and the crew thirty-three souls all told. With this slender armament they undertook to traverse unknown and dangerous seas, and to explore the barbarous shores of that vast continent recently discovered by Columbus;—such was the daring spirit of the Spanish voyagers of those days.

It was about the beginning of June, 1499, and but a few days after the departure of Ojeda, that they put to sea. They sailed from the little port of Palos, the original cradle of American discovery, whose brave and skilful mariners long continued foremost in all enterprises to the New World. Being guided by the chart of Columbus, they followed his route, and

* Pronounced Ninyo. The Ñ in Spanish is always pronounced as if followed by the letter y.

† Testimony of Bastides in the law-suit of Diego Columbus.

reached the southern continent, a little beyond Paria, about fifteen days after the same coast had been visited by Ojeda.

They then proceeded to the gulf of Paria, where they landed to cut dye-wood, and were amicably entertained by the natives. Shortly after, sallying from the gulf by the Boca del Drago, they encountered eighteen canoes of Caribs, the pirate-rovers of these seas and the terror of the bordering lands. This savage armada, instead of being daunted as usual by the sight of a European ship with swelling sails, resembling some winged monster of the deep, considered it only as an object of plunder or hostility, and assailed it with showers of arrows. The sudden burst of artillery, however, from the sides of the caravel and the havoc made among the Caribs by this seeming thunder, struck them with dismay and they fled in all directions. The Spaniards succeeded in capturing one of the canoes, with one of the warriors who had manned it. In the bottom of the canoe lay an Indian prisoner bound hand and foot. On being liberated, he informed the Spaniards by signs that these Caribs had been on a marauding expedition along the neighbouring coasts, shutting themselves up at night in a stockade which they carried with them, and issuing forth by day to plunder the villages and to make captives. He had been one of seven prisoners. His companions had been devoured before his eyes at the cannibal banquets of these savages, and he had been awaiting the same miserable fate. Honest Niño and his confederates were so indignant at this recital, that, receiving it as established fact, they performed what they considered an act of equitable justice, by abandoning the Carib to the discretion of his late captive. The latter fell upon the defenceless warrior with fist and foot and cudgel; nor did his rage subside even after the breath had been mauled out of his victim, but, tearing the grim head from the body, he placed it on a pole as a trophy of his vengeance.

Niño and his fellow-adventurers now steered for the island of Margarita, where they obtained a considerable quantity of pearls by barter. They afterwards skirted the opposite coast of Cumana, trading cautiously and shrewdly from port to port, sometimes remaining on board of their little bark, and obliging the savages to come off to them, when the latter appeared too numerous, at other times venturing on shore, and even into the interior. They were invariably treated with amity by the natives, who were perfectly naked, excepting that they were adorned with necklaces and bracelets of pearls. These they

sometimes gave freely to the Spaniards, at other times they exchanged them for glass beads and other trinkets, and smiled at the folly of the strangers in making such silly bargains.*

The Spaniards were struck with the grandeur and density of the forests along this coast, for in these regions of heat and moisture, vegetation appears in its utmost magnificence. They heard also the cries and roarings of wild and unknown animals in the woodlands, which, however, appeared not to be very dangerous, as the Indians went about the forest armed solely with bows and arrows. From meeting with deer and rabbits, they were convinced that that was a part of *Terra Firma*, not having found any animals of the kind on the islands.†

Niño and Guerra were so well pleased with the hospitality of the natives of Cumana, and with the profitable traffic for pearls, by which they obtained many of great size and beauty, that they remained upwards of three months on the coast.

They then proceeded westward to a country called Cauchieto, trading as usual for pearls, and for the inferior kind of gold called *guanin*. At length they arrived at a place where there was a kind of fortress protecting a number of houses and gardens situated on a river, the whole forming to the eyes of the Spaniards one of the most delicious abodes imaginable. They were about to land and enjoy the pleasures of this fancied paradise, when they beheld upwards of a thousand Indians, armed with bows and arrows and war-clubs, preparing to give them a warm reception; having been probably incensed by the recent visit of Ojeda. As Niño and Guerra had not the fighting propensities of Ojeda, and were in quest of profit rather than renown, having, moreover, in all probability, the fear of the rich merchant of Seville before their eyes, they prudently abstained from landing, and, abandoning this hostile coast, returned forthwith to Cumana to resume their trade for pearls. They soon amassed a great number, many of which were equal in size and beauty to the most celebrated of the East, though they had been injured in boring from a want of proper implements.

Satisfied with their success they now set sail for Spain, and piloted their little bark safely to Bayonne in Gallicia, where they anchored about the middle of April, 1500, nearly two

* Las Casas. Hist. Ind., lib. i. c. 171.

† Navarrete, t. iii. p. 14.

months before the arrival of Ojeda and his associates, La Cosa and Vespucci.*

The most successful voyagers to the New World were doomed to trouble from their very success. The ample amount of pearls paid to the treasury, as the royal portion of the profits of this expedition, drew suspicion instead of favour upon the two adventurers. They were accused of having concealed a great part of the pearls collected by them, thus defrauding their companions and the crown. Pedro Alonzo Niño was actually thrown into prison on this accusation, but, nothing being proved against him, was eventually set free, and enjoyed the enviable reputation of having performed the richest voyage that had yet been made to the New World.†

* Peter Martyr. Other historians give a different date for their arrival. Herrera says Feb. 6.

† Navarrete. Collect. t. iii. p. 11. Herrera, d. i. l. iv. c. v. ..

VICENTE YAÑEZ PINZON.—(1499).

AMONG the maritime adventurers of renown who were roused to action by the licenses granted for private expeditions of discovery, we find conspicuous the name of Vicente Yañez Pinzon, of Palos, one of the three brave brothers who aided Columbus in his first voyage and risked life and fortune with him in his doubtful and perilous enterprise.

Of Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the eldest and most important of these three brothers, particular mention has been made in the History of Columbus, and of the unfortunate error in conduct which severed him from the admiral, brought on him the displeasure of the sovereigns, and probably contributed to his premature and melancholy death.

Whatever cloud of disgrace may have overshadowed his family, it was but temporary. The death of Martin Alonzo, as usual, atoned for his faults, and his good deeds lived after him. The merits and services of himself and his brothers were acknowledged, and the survivors of the family were restored to royal confidence. A feeling of jealous hostility prevented them from taking a part in the subsequent voyages of Columbus; but the moment the door was thrown open for individual enterprise, they pressed forward for permission to engage in it at their own risk and expense—and it was readily granted. In fact, their supposed hostility to Columbus was one of the surest recommendations they could have to the favour of the Bishop Fonseca, by whom the license was issued for their expedition.

Vicente Yañez Pinzon was the leader of this new enterprise, and he was accompanied by two nephews named Arias Perez and Diego Fernandez, sons of his late brother, Martin Alonzo Pinzon. Several of his sailors had sailed with Columbus in his recent voyage to Paria, as had also his three principal pilots, Juan Quintero, Juan de Umbria, and Juan de Jerez. Thus these minor voyages seemed all to emanate from the

great expeditions of Columbus, and to aim at realizing the ideas and speculations contained in the papers transmitted by him to Spain.

The armament consisted of four caravels, and was fitted out at the port of Palos. The funds of Vicente Yañez were completely exhausted before he had fitted out his little squadron; he was obliged, therefore, to purchase on credit the sea-stores and articles of traffic necessary for the enterprise. The merchants of Palos seemed to have known how to profit by the careless nature of sailors and the sanguine spirit of discoverers. In their bargains they charged honest Pinzon eighty and a hundred per cent. above the market value of their merchandise, and in the hurry and urgency of the moment he was obliged to submit to the imposition.*

The squadron put to sea in the beginning of December, 1499, and, after passing the Canary and Cape de Verde Islands, stood to the south-west. Having sailed about seven hundred leagues, they crossed the equator and lost sight of the north star. They had scarcely passed the equinoctial line when they encountered a terrible tempest, which had well-nigh swallowed up their slender barks. The storm passed away and the firmament was again serene; but the mariners remained tossing about in confusion, dismayed by the turbulence of the waves and the strange aspect of the heavens. They looked in vain to the south for some polar star by which to shape their course, and fancied that some swelling prominence of the globe concealed it from their view. They knew nothing as yet of the firmament of that hemisphere, nor of that beautiful constellation, the southern cross, but expected to find a guiding star at the opposite pole, similar to the cynosure of the north.

Pinzon, however, who was of an intrepid spirit, pursued his course resolutely to the west, and after sailing about two hundred and forty leagues, and being in the eighth degree of southern latitude, he beheld land afar off on the 28th of January, to which he gave the name of *Santa Maria de la Consolacion*, from the sight of it having consoled him in the midst of doubts and perplexities. It is now called Cape St. Augustine, and forms the most prominent part of the immense empire of Brazil.

The sea was turbid and discoloured as in rivers, and on

* Navarrete, vol. iii. See Doc. No. 7, where Vincente Yañez Pinzon petitions for redress.

sounding they had sixteen fathoms of water. Pinzon landed, accompanied by a notary and witnesses, and took formal possession of the territory for the Castilian crown; no one appeared to dispute his pretensions, but he observed the print of footsteps on the beach which seemed of gigantic size.

At night there were fires lighted upon a neighbouring part of the coast, which induced Pinzon on the following morning to send forty men well armed to the spot. A band of Indians, of about equal number, sallied forth to encounter them, armed with bows and arrows, and seemingly of extraordinary stature. A still greater number were seen in the distance hastening to the support of their companions. The Indians arrayed themselves for combat, and the two parties remained for a short time eyeing each other with mutual curiosity and distrust. The Spaniards now displayed looking-glasses, beads, and other trinkets, and jingled strings of hawks' bells, in general so captivating to an Indian ear; but the haughty savages treated all their overtures with contempt, regarding these offerings carelessly for a short time, and then stalking off with stoic gravity. They were ferocious of feature, and apparently warlike in disposition, and are supposed to have been a wandering race of unusual size, who roamed about in the night, and were of the most fierce, untractable nature. By nightfall there was not an Indian to be seen in the neighbourhood.

Discouraged by the inhospitable character of the coast, Pinzon made sail and stood to the north-west, until he came to the mouth of a river too shallow to receive his ships. Here he sent his boats on shore with a number of men well armed. They landed on the river banks, and beheld a multitude of naked Indians on a neighbouring hill. A single Spaniard armed simply with sword and buckler was sent to invite them to friendly intercourse. He approached them with signs of amity, and threw to them a hawk's bell. They replied to him with similar signs, and threw to him a small gilded wand. The soldier stooped to pick it up, when suddenly a troop of savages rushed down to seize him; he threw himself immediately upon the defensive, with sword and target, and though but a small man, and far from robust, he handled his weapons with such dexterity and fierceness, that he kept the savages at bay, making a clear circle round him, and wounding several who attempted to break it. His unlooked-for prowess surprised and confounded his assailants, and gave time for his comrades to come to his assistance. The Indians then made a general

assault, with such a galling discharge of darts and arrows that almost immediately eight or ten Spaniards were slain, and many more wounded. The latter were compelled to retreat to their boats disputing every inch of ground. The Indians pursued them even into the water, surrounding the boats and seizing hold of the oars. The Spaniards made a desperate defence, thrusting many through with their lances, and cutting down and ripping up others with their swords; but such was the ferocity of the survivors, that they persisted in their attack until they overpowered the crew of one of the boats, and bore it off in triumph. With this they retired from the combat, and the Spaniards returned, defeated and disheartened, to their ships, having met with the roughest reception that the Europeans had yet experienced in the New World.

Pinzon now stood forty leagues to the north-west, until he arrived in the neighbourhood of the equinoctial line. Here he found the water of the sea so fresh that he was enabled to replenish his casks with it. Astonished at so singular a phenomenon he stood in for the land, and arrived among a number of fresh and verdant islands, inhabited by a gentle and hospitable race of people, gaily painted, who came off to the ships with the most frank and fearless confidence. Pinzon soon found that these islands lay in the mouth of an immense river, more than thirty leagues in breadth, the water of which entered upwards of forty leagues into the sea before losing its sweetness. It was, in fact, the renowned Marañon, since known as the Orellana and the Amazon. While lying in the mouth of this river there was a sudden swelling of the stream, which, being opposed by the current of the sea, and straitened by the narrow channels of the islands, rose more than five fathoms, with mountain waves, and a tremendous noise, threatening the destruction of the ships. Pinzon extricated his little squadron with great difficulty from this perilous situation, and finding there was but little gold or any thing else of value to be found among the simple natives, he requited their hospitality, in the mode too common among the early discoverers, by carrying off thirty-six of them captive.

Having regained the sight of the polar star, Pinzon pursued his course along the coast, passing the mouths of the Oronoko, and entering the Gulf of Paria, where he landed and cut Brazil-wood. Sallying forth by the Boca del Drago, he reached the island of Hispaniola about the 23d of June, from whence he sailed for the Bahamas. Here, in the month of July, while

at anchor, there came such a tremendous hurricane that two of the caravels were swallowed up with all their crews in the sight of their terrified companions; a third parted her cables and was driven out to sea, while the fourth was so furiously beaten by the tempest that the crew threw themselves into the boats and made for shore. Here they found a few naked Indians, who offered them no molestation; but, fearing that they might spread the tidings of a handful of shipwrecked Spaniards being upon the coast, and thus bring the savages of the neighbouring islands upon them, a council of war was held whether it would not be a wise precaution to put these Indians to death. Fortunately for the latter, the vessel which had been driven from her anchors returned and put an end to the alarm, and to the council of war. The other caravel also rode out the storm uninjured, and the sea subsiding, the Spaniards returned on board, and made the best of their way to the Island of Hispaniola. Having repaired the damages sustained in the gale, they again made sail for Spain, and came to anchor in the river before Palos about the end of September.

Thus ended one of the most chequered and disastrous voyages that had yet been made to the New World. Yañez Pinzon had lost two of his ships, and many of his men; what made the loss of the latter more grievous was that they had been enlisted from among his neighbours, his friends, and relatives. In fact, the expeditions to the New World must have realized the terrors and apprehensions of the people of Palos by filling that little community with widows and orphans. When the rich merchants, who had sold goods to Pinzon, at a hundred per cent. advance, beheld him return in this sorry condition, with two shattered barks and a handful of poor tattered, weather-beaten seamen, they began to tremble for their money. No sooner, therefore, had he and his nephews departed to Granada, to give an account of their discoveries to the sovereigns, than the merchants seized upon their caravels and cargoes, and began to sell them to repay themselves. Honest Pinzon immediately addressed a petition to the government, stating the imposition that had been practised upon him, and the danger he was in of imprisonment and utter ruin, should his creditors be allowed to sacrifice his goods at a public sale. He petitioned that they might be compelled to return the property thus seized, and that he might be enabled to sell three hundred and fifty quintals of Brazil-wood, which he had brought back with him, and which would be sufficient to

satisfy the demands of his creditors. The sovereigns granted his prayer. They issued an order to the civil authorities of Palos to interfere in the matter, with all possible promptness and brevity, allowing no vexatious delay, and administering justice so impartially that neither of the parties should have cause to complain.

Pinzon escaped from the fangs of his creditors, but, of course, must have suffered in purse from the expenses of the law; which, in Spain, is apt to bury even a successful client under an overwhelming mountain of documents and writings. We infer this in respect to Pinzon from a royal order issued in the following year allowing him to export a quantity of grain, in consideration of the heavy losses he had sustained in his voyage of discovery. He did but share the usual lot of the Spanish discoverers, whose golden anticipations too frequently ended in penury; but he is distinguished from among the crowd of them by being the first European who crossed the Equinoctial line, on the western ocean, and by discovering the great kingdom of Brazil.*

* On the 5th of September, 1501, a royal permission was given to Vicente Yañez Pinzon to colonize and govern the lands he had discovered, beginning a little north of the river Amazon, and extending to Cape St. Augustine. The object of the government in this permission was to establish an outpost and a resolute commander on this southern frontier, that should check any intrusions the Portuguese might make in consequence of the accidental discovery of a part of the coast of Brazil by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, in 1500. The subsequent arrangement of a partition line between the two countries prevented the necessity of this precaution, and it does not appear that Vicente Yañez Pinzon made any second voyage to those parts.

In 1506 he undertook an expedition in company with Juan Diaz de Solis, a native of Lebrija, the object of which was to endeavour to find the strait or passage supposed by Columbus to lead from the Atlantic to a southern ocean. It was necessarily without success, as was also another voyage made by them, for the same purpose, in 1508. As no such passage exists, no blame could attach to those able navigators for being foiled in the object of their search.

In consequence of the distinguished merits and services of the Pinzon family they were raised, by the emperor Charles V., to the dignity of a *Hidalguia*, or nobility, without any express title, and a coat of arms was granted them, on which were emblazoned three caravels, with a hand at the stern pointing to an island covered with savages. This coat of arms is still maintained by the family, who have added to it the motto granted to Columbus, merely substituting the name of Pinzon for that of the Admiral;

A Castile y a Leon,
Nuevo Mundo dio Pinzon.

DIEGO DE LEPE AND RODRIGO DE BASTIDES. (1500.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the hardships and disasters that had beset the voyages to the New World, and the penury in which their golden anticipations had too frequently terminated, adventurers continued to press forward, excited by fresh reports of newly-discovered regions, each of which, in its turn was represented as the real land of promise. Scarcely had Vicente Yañez Pinzon departed on the voyage recently narrated, when his townsman, Diego de Lepe, likewise set sail with two vessels from the busy little port of Palos on a like expedition. No particulars of importance are known of this voyage, excepting that Lepe doubled Cape St. Augustine, and beheld the southern continent stretching far to the southwest. On returning to Spain he drew a chart of the coast for the bishop Fonseca, and enjoyed the reputation, for upwards of ten years afterwards, of having extended his discoveries further south than any other voyager.

Another contemporary adventurer to the New World was Rodrigo de Bastides, a wealthy notary of Triana, the suburb of Seville inhabited by the maritime part of its population. Being sanctioned by the sovereigns, to whom he engaged to yield a fourth of his profits, he fitted out two caravels in October, 1500, to go in quest of gold and pearls.

Prudently distrusting his own judgment in nautical matters, this adventurous notary associated with him the veteran pilot Juan de la Cosa, the same hardy Biscayan who had sailed with Columbus and Ojeda. A general outline of their voyage has already been given in the life of Columbus; it extended the discoveries of the coast of Terra Firma from Cape de la Vela, where Ojeda had left off, quite to the port of Nombre de Dios.

Bastides distinguished himself from the mass of discoverers by his kind treatment of the natives, and Juan de la Cosa by his sound discretion and his able seamanship. Their voyage

had been extremely successful, and they had collected, by barter, a great amount of gold and pearls, when their prosperous career was checked by an unlooked-for evil. Their vessels, to their surprise, became leaky in every part, and they discovered, to their dismay, that the bottoms were pierced in innumerable places by the broma, or worm which abounds in the waters of the torrid zone, but of which they, as yet, had scarcely any knowledge. It was with great difficulty they could keep afloat until they reached a small islet on the coast of Hispaniola. Here they repaired their ships as well as they were able, and again put to sea to return to Cadiz. A succession of gales drove them back to port; the ravages of the worms continued; the leaks broke out afresh; they landed the most portable and precious part of their wealthy cargoes, and the vessels foundered with the remainder. Bastides lost, moreover, the arms and ammunition saved from the wreck, being obliged to destroy them lest they should fall into the hands of the Indians.

Distributing his men into three bands, two of them headed by La Cosa and himself, they set off for San Domingo by three several routes, as the country was not able to furnish provisions for so large a body. Each band was provided with a coffer stored with trinkets and other articles of Indian traffic, with which to buy provisions on the road.

Francisco de Bobadilla, the wrong-headed oppressor and superseder of Columbus, was at that time governor of San Domingo. The report reached him that a crew of adventurers had landed on the island, and were marching through the country in three bands, each provided with a coffer of gold, and carrying on illicit trade with the natives. The moment Bastides made his appearance, therefore, he was seized and thrown into prison, and an investigation commenced. In his defence he maintained that his only traffic with the natives was for the purpose of procuring provisions for his followers, or guides for his journey. It was determined, however, to send him to Spain for trial, with the written testimony and the other documents of his examination.

He was accordingly conveyed in the same fleet in which Bobadilla embarked for Spain, and which experienced such an awful shipwreck in the sight of Columbus. The ship Rodrigo Bastides was one of the few that outlived the tempest: it arrived safe at Cadiz in September, 1502. Bastides was ultimately acquitted of the charges advanced against him. So

lucrative had been his voyage, that, notwithstanding the losses sustained by the foundering of his vessels, he was enabled to pay a large sum to the crown as a fourth of his profits, and to retain a great amount for himself. In reward of his services and discoveries the sovereigns granted him an annual revenue for life, to arise from the proceeds of the province of Uraba, which he had discovered. An equal pension was likewise assigned to the hardy Juan de la Cosa, to result from the same territory, of which he was appointed Alguazil Mayor.* Such was the economical generosity of King Ferdinand, who rewarded the past toils of his adventurous discoverers out of the expected produce of their future labours.

* Navarrete. Collec. t. iii.

SECOND VOYAGE OF ALONZO DE OJEDA
(1502.)

THE first voyage of Alonzo de Ojeda to the coast of Paria, and its meagre termination in June, 1500, has been related. He gained nothing in wealth by that expedition, but he added to his celebrity as a bold and skilful adventurer. His youthful fire, his sanguine and swelling spirit, and the wonderful stories that were told of his activity and prowess, made him extremely popular, so that his patron, the bishop Fonseca, found it an easy matter to secure for him the royal favour. In consideration of his past services and of others expected from him, a grant was made to him of six leagues of land on the southern part of Hispaniola, and the government of the province of Coquibacoa which he had discovered. He was, furthermore, authorized to fit out any number of ships, not exceeding ten, at his own expense, and to prosecute the discovery of the coast of Terra Firma. He was not to touch or traffic on the pearl coast of Paria; extending as far as a bay in the vicinity of the island of Margarita. Beyond this he had a right to trade in all kinds of merchandise, whether of pearls, jewels, metals, or precious stones; paying one-fifth of the profits to the crown, and abstaining from making slaves of the Indians without a special license from the sovereigns. He was to colonize Coquibacoa, and, as a recompense, was to enjoy one-half of the proceeds of his territory, provided the half did not exceed 300,000 maravedies: all beyond that amount was to go to the crown.

A principal reason, however, for granting this government and those privileges to Ojeda, was that, in his previous voyage, he had met with English adventurers on a voyage of discovery in the neighbourhood of Coquibacoa, at which the jealousy of the sovereigns had taken the alarm. They were anxious, therefore, to establish a resolute and fighting commander like Ojeda upon this outpost, and they instructed him to set up the

arms of Castile and Leon in every place he visited, as a signal of discovery and possession, and to put a stop to the intrusions of the English.*

With this commission in his pocket, and the government of an Indian territory in the perspective, Ojeda soon found associates to aid him in fitting out an armament. These were Juan de Vergara, a servant of a rich canon of the cathedral of Seville, and Garcia de Campos, commonly called Ocampo. They made a contract of partnership to last for two years, according to which the expenses and profits of the expedition, and of the government of Coquibacoa, were to be shared equally between them. The purses of the confederates were not ample enough to afford ten ships, but they fitted out four. 1st, The Santa Maria de la Antigua, commanded by Garcia del Campo; 2d, The Santa Maria de la Granada, commanded by Juan de Vergara; 3d, The Caravel Magdalena, commanded by Pedro de Ojeda, nephew to Alonzo; and 4th, The Caravel Santa Ana, commanded by Hernando de Guevara. The whole was under the command of Alonzo de Ojeda. The expedition set sail in 1502, touched at the Canaries, according to custom, to take in provisions, and then proceeded westward for the shores of the New World.

After traversing the Gulf of Paria, and before reaching the Island of Margarita, the Caravel Santa Ana, commanded by Hernando de Guevara, was separated from them, and for several days the ships were mutually seeking each other, in these silent and trackless seas. After they were all reunited they found their provisions growing scanty; they landed therefore at a part of the coast called Cumana by the natives, but to which, from its beauty and fertility, Ojeda gave the name of Valfermoso. While foraging here for their immediate supplies, the idea occurred to Ojeda that he should want furniture and utensils of all kinds for his proposed colony, and that it would be better to pillage them from a country where he was a mere transient visitor, than to wrest them from his neighbours in the territory where he was to set up his government. His companions were struck with the policy, if not the justice, of this idea, and they all set to work to carry it into execution. Dispersing themselves, therefore, in ambush in various directions, they at a concerted signal rushed forth from their concealment, and set upon the natives. Ojeda had issued orders

* Navarrete, t. iii., document x.

to do as little injury and damage as possible, and on no account to destroy the habitations of the Indians. His followers, however, in their great zeal, transcended his orders. Seven or eight Indians were killed and many wounded in the skirmish which took place, and a number of their cabins were wrapped in flames. A great quantity of hammocks, of cotton, and of utensils of various kinds, fell into the hands of the conquerors; they also captured several female Indians, some of whom were ransomed with the kind of gold called *guanin*; some were retained by Vergara for himself and his friend Ocampo; others were distributed among the crews; the rest, probably the old and ugly, were set at liberty. As to Ojeda, he reserved nothing for himself of the spoil excepting a single hammock.

The ransom paid by the poor Indians for some of their effects and some of their women, yielded the Spaniards a trifling quantity of gold, but they found the place destitute of provisions, and Ojeda was obliged to despatch Vergara in a caravel to the island of Jamaica to forage for supplies, with instructions to rejoin him at Maracaibo or Cape de la Vela.

Ojeda at length arrived at Coquibacoa, at the port destined for his seat of government. He found the country, however, so poor and sterile, that he proceeded along the coast to a bay which he named Santa Cruz, but which is supposed to be the same at present called *Bahia Honda*, where he found a Spaniard who had been left in the province of Citarma by Bastides in his late voyage about thirteen months before, and had remained ever since among the Indians, so that he had acquired their language.

Ojeda determined to form his settlement at this place; but the natives seemed disposed to defend their territory, for, the moment a party landed to procure water, they were assailed by a galling shower of arrows, and driven back to the ships. Upon this Ojeda landed with all his force, and struck such terror into the Indians, that they came forward with signs of amity, and brought a considerable quantity of gold as a peace-offering, which was graciously accepted.

Ojeda, with the concurrence of his associates, now set to work to establish a settlement, cutting down trees, and commencing a fortress. They had scarce begun, when they were attacked by a neighbouring cacique, but Ojeda sallied forth upon him with such intrepidity and effect as not merely to defeat, but to drive him from the neighbourhood. He then proceeded quietly to finish his fortress, which was defended by

lombards, and contained the magazine of provisions and the treasure amassed in the expedition. The provisions were dealt out twice a day, under the inspection of proper officers; the treasure gained by barter, by ransom, or by plunder, was deposited in a strong box secured by two locks, one key being kept by the royal supervisor, the other by Ocampo.

In the mean time provisions became scarce. The Indians never appeared in the neighbourhood of the fortress, except to harass it with repeated though ineffectual assaults. Vergara did not appear with the expected supplies from Jamaica, and a caravel was despatched in search of him. The people, worn out with labour and privations of various kinds, and disgusted with the situation of a settlement, which was in a poor and unhealthy country, grew discontented and factious. They began to fear that they should lose the means of departing, as their vessels were in danger of being destroyed by the broom or worms. Ojeda led them forth repeatedly upon foraging parties about the adjacent country, and collected some provisions and booty in the Indian villages. The provisions he deposited in the magazine, part of the spoils he divided among his followers, and the gold he locked up in the strong box, the keys of which he took possession of, to the great displeasure of the supervisor and his associate Ocampo. The murmurs of the people grew loud as their sufferings increased. They insinuated that Ojeda had no authority over this part of the coast, having passed the boundaries of his government, and formed his settlement in the country discovered by Bastides. By the time Vergara arrived from Jamaica, the factions of this petty colony had risen to an alarming height. Ocampo had a personal enmity to the governor arising probably from some feud about the strong box; being a particular friend of Vergara, he held a private conference with him, and laid a plan to entrap the doughty Ojeda. In pursuance of this the latter was invited on board of the caravel of Vergara to see the provisions he had brought from Jamaica, but no sooner was he on board than they charged him with having transgressed the limits of his government, with having provoked the hostility of the Indians, and needlessly sacrificed the lives of his followers, and above all, with having taking possession of the strong box, in contempt of the authority of the royal supervisor, and with the intention of appropriating to himself all the gains of the enterprise; they informed him, therefore, of their intention to convey him a prisoner to Hispaniola, to answer to the Gov-

error for his offences. Ojeda finding himself thus entrapped, proposed to Vergara and Ocampo that they should return to Spain with such of the crews as chose to accompany them, leaving him with the remainder to prosecute his enterprise. The two recreant partners at first consented, for they were disgusted with the enterprise, which offered little profit and severe hardships. They agreed to leave Ojeda the smallest of the caravels, with a third of the provisions and of their gains, and to build a row boat for him. They actually began to labour upon the boat. Before ten days had elapsed, however, they repented of the arrangement, the ship-carpenters were ill, there were no caulkers, and moreover, they recollected that as Ojeda, according to their representations, was a defaulter to the crown, they would be liable as his sureties, should they return to Spain without him. They concluded, therefore, that the wisest plan was to give him nothing, but to carry him off prisoner.

When Ojeda learned the determination of his wary partners, he attempted to make his escape and get off to St. Domingo, but he was seized, thrown in irons, and conveyed on board of the caravel. The two partners then set sail from Santa Cruz, bearing off the whole community, its captive governor, and the litigated strong box.

They put to sea about the beginning of September, and arrived at the western part of the island of Hispaniola. While at anchor within a stone's throw of the land, Ojeda, confident in his strength and skill as a swimmer, let himself quietly slide down the side of the ship into the water during the night, and attempted to swim for the shore. His arms were free, but his feet were shackled, and the weight of his irons threatened to sink him. He was obliged to shout for help; a boat was sent from the vessel to his relief, and the unfortunate governor was brought back half drowned to his unrelenting partners.*

The latter now landed and delivered their prisoner into the hands of Gallego, the commander of the place, to be put at the disposal of the governor of the island. In the mean time the strong box, which appears to have been at the bottom of all these feuds, remained in the possession of Vergara and Ocampo, who, Ojeda says, took from it whatever they thought proper, without regard to the royal dues or the consent of the

* Hist. Gen. de Viages. Herrera, Hist. Ind.

royal supervisor. They were all together, prisoner and accusers, in the city of San Domingo, about the end of September 1502, when the chief judge of the island, after hearing both parties, gave a verdict against Ojeda that stripped him of all his effects, and brought him into debt to the crown for the royal proportion of the profits of the voyage. Ojeda appealed to the sovereign, and, after some time, was honourably acquitted, by the royal council, from all the charges, and a mandate was issued in 1503, ordering a restitution of his property. It appears, however, that the costs of justice, or rather of the law, consumed his share of the treasure of the strong box, and that a royal order was necessary to liberate him from the hands of the governor; so that, like too many other litigants, he finally emerged from the labyrinths of the law a triumphant client but a ruined man.

THIRD VOYAGE OF ALONZO DE OJEDA.

CHAPTER I.

OJEDA APPLIES FOR A COMMAND—HAS A RIVAL CANDIDATE IN
DIEGO DE NICUESA—HIS SUCCESS.

FOR several years after his ruinous, though successful lawsuit, we lose all traces of Alonzo de Ojeda, excepting that we are told he made another voyage to the vicinity of Coquibacoa, in 1505. No record remains of this expedition, which seems to have been equally unprofitable with the preceding, for we find him, in 1508, in the island of Hispaniola, as poor in purse, though as proud in spirit, as ever. In fact, however fortune might have favoured him, he had a heedless, squandering disposition that would always have kept him poor.

About this time the cupidity of King Ferdinand was greatly excited by the accounts which had been given by Columbus, of the gold mines of Veragua, in which the admiral fancied he had discovered the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients, from whence King Solomon procured the gold used in building the temple of Jerusalem. Subsequent voyagers had corroborated the opinion of Columbus as to the general riches of the coast of Terra Firma; King Ferdinand resolved, therefore, to found regular colonies along that coast and to place the whole under some capable commander. A project of the kind had been conceived by Columbus, when he discovered that region in the course of his last voyage, and the reader may remember the disasters experienced by his brother Don Bartholomew and himself, in endeavouring to establish a colony on the hostile shores of Veragua. The admiral being dead, the person who should naturally have presented himself to the mind of the sovereign for this particular service was Don Bartholomew, but the wary and selfish monarch knew the Adelantado to be as lofty in his terms as his late brother, and preferred to accomplish his purposes by cheaper agents. He was unwilling, also,

to increase the consequence of a family, whose vast, but just, claims were already a cause of repining to his sordid and jealous spirit. He looked round, therefore, among the crowd of adventurers, who had sprung up in the school of Columbus, for some individual who might be ready to serve him on more accommodating terms. Among those, considered by their friends as most fitted for this purpose, was Alonzo de Ojeda, for his roving voyages and daring exploits had made him famous among the voyagers; and it was thought that an application on his part would be attended with success, for he was known to possess a staunch friend at court in the Bishop Fonseca. Unfortunately he was too far distant to urge his suit to the bishop, and what was worse, he was destitute of money. At this juncture there happened to be at Hispaniola the veteran navigator and pilot, Juan de la Cosa, who was a kind of Nestor in all nautical affairs.* The hardy Biscayan had sailed with Ojeda, and had conceived a great opinion of the courage and talents of the youthful adventurer. He had contrived, also, to fill his purse in the course of his cruising, and now, in the generous spirit of a sailor, offered to aid Ojeda with it in the prosecution of his wishes.

His offer was gladly accepted; it was agreed that Juan de la Cosa should depart for Spain, to promote the appointment of Ojeda to the command of Terra Firma, and, in case of success, should fit out, with his own funds, the necessary armament.

La Cosa departed on his embassy; he called on the Bishop Fonseca, who, as had been expected, entered warmly into the views of his favourite, Ojeda, and recommended him to the ambitious and bigot king, as a man well fitted to promote his empire in the wilderness, and to dispense the blessings of Christianity among the savages.

The recommendation of the bishop was usually effectual in the affairs of the New World, and the opinion of the veteran de la Cosa had great weight even with the sovereign; but a

* Peter Martyr gives the following weighty testimony to the knowledge and skill of this excellent seaman:—"Of the Spaniards, as many as thought themselves to have any knowledge of what pertained to measure the land and sea, drew cartes (charts) on parchment as concerning these navigations. Of all others they most esteem them which Juan de la Cosa, the companion of Ojeda, and another pilot, called Andres Morales, had set forth, and this as well for the great experience which both had, (*to whom these tracks were as well known as the chambers of their own houses,*) as also that they were thought to be cunninger in that part of cosmography which teacheth the description and measuring of the sea."—*P. Martyr, Decad. ii. c. 10.*

rival candidate to Ojeda had presented himself, and one who had the advantage of higher connexions and greater pecuniary means. This was Diego de Nicuesa, an accomplished courtier of noble birth, who had filled the post of grand carver to Don Enrique Enriquez, uncle of the king. Nature, education, and habit seemed to have combined to form Nicuesa as a complete rival of Ojeda. Like him he was small of stature, but remarkable for symmetry and compactness of form and for bodily strength and activity; like him he was master at all kinds of weapons, and skilled, not merely in feats of agility but in those graceful and chivalrous exercises, which the Spanish cavaliers of those days had inherited from the Moors; being noted for his vigour and address in the jousts or tilting matches after the Moresco fashion. Ojeda himself could not surpass him in feats of horsemanship, and particular mention is made of a favourite mare, which he could make caper and carricol in strict cadence to the sound of a viol; beside all this, he was versed in the legendary ballads or romances of his country, and was renowned as a capital performer on the guitar! Such were the qualifications of this candidate for a command in the wilderness, as enumerated by the reverend Bishop Las Casas. It is probable, however, that he had given evidence of qualities more adapted to the desired post; having already been out to Hispaniola in the military train of the late Governor Ovando.

Where merits were so singularly balanced as those of Ojeda and Nicuesa, it might have been difficult to decide; King Ferdinand avoided the dilemma by favouring both of the candidates; not indeed by furnishing them with ships and money, but by granting patents and dignities which cost nothing, and might bring rich returns.

He divided that part of the continent which lies along the Isthmus of Darien into two provinces, the boundary line running through the Gulf of Uraba. The eastern part, extending to Cape de la Vela, was called New Andalusia, the government of it given to Ojeda. The other, to the west, including Veragua, and reaching to Cape Gracias á Dios, was assigned to Nicuesa. The island of Jamaica was given to the two governors in common, as a place from whence to draw supplies of provisions. Each of the governors was to erect two fortresses in his district, and to enjoy for ten years the profits of all the mines he should discover, paying to the crown one-tenth part the first year, one-ninth the second, one-eighth the third, one-seventh the fourth, and one-fifth part in each of the remaining years.

Juan de la Cosa, who had been indefatigable in promoting the suit of Ojeda, was appointed his lieutenant in the government, with the post of Alguazil Mayor of the province. He immediately freighted a ship and two brigantines, in which he embarked with about two hundred men. It was a slender armament, but the purse of the honest voyager was not very deep, and that of Ojeda was empty. Nicuesa, having ampler means, armed four large vessels and two brigantines, furnished them with abundant munitions and supplies, both for the voyage and the projected colony, enlisted a much greater force, and set sail in gay and vaunting style, for the golden shores of Veragua, the Aurea Chersonesus of his imagination.

CHAPTER II.

FEUD BETWEEN THE RIVAL GOVERNORS, OJEDA AND NICUESA— A CHALLENGE.—(1509.)

THE two rival armaments arrived at San Domingo about the same time. Nicuesa had experienced what was doubtless considered a pleasant little turn of fortune by the way. Touching at Santa Cruz, one of the Carribee islands, he had succeeded in capturing a hundred of the natives, whom he had borne off in his ships to be sold as slaves at Hispaniola. This was deemed justifiable in those days, even by the most scrupulous divines, from the belief that the Caribs were all anthropophagi, or man-eaters; fortunately the opinion of mankind, in this more enlightened age, makes but little difference in atrocity between the cannibal and the kidnapper.

Alonzo de Ojeda welcomed with joy the arrival of his nautical friend and future lieutenant in the government, the worthy Juan de la Cosa; still he could not but feel some mortification at the inferiority of his armament to that of his rival Nicuesa, whose stately ships rode proudly at anchor in the harbour of San Domingo. He felt, too, that his means were inadequate to the establishment of his intended colony. Ojeda, however, was not long at a loss for pecuniary assistance. Like many free-spirited men, who are careless and squandering of their own purses, he had a facility at commanding the purses of his neighbours. Among the motley population of San Domingo there was a lawyer of some abili-

ties, the Bachelor Martin Fernandez de Enciso, who had made two thousand castillanos by his pleading;* for it would appear that the spirit of litigation was one of the first fruits of civilized life transplanted to the New World, and flourished surprisingly among the Spanish colonists.

Alonzo de Ojeda became acquainted with the Bachelor, and finding him to be of a restless and speculative character, soon succeeded in inspiring him with a contempt for the dull but secure and profitable routine of his office in San Domingo, and imbuing him with his own passion for adventure. Above all, he dazzled him with the offer to make him *Alcalde Mayor*, or chief judge of the provincial government he was about to establish in the wilderness.

In an evil hour the aspiring Bachelor yielded to the temptation, and agreed to invest all his money in the enterprise. It was agreed that Ojeda should depart with the armament which had arrived from Spain, while the Bachelor should remain at Hispaniola to beat up for recruits and provide supplies; with these he was to embark in a ship purchased by himself, and proceed to join his high-mettled friend at the seat of his intended colony. Two rival governors, so well matched as Ojeda and Nicuesa, and both possessed of swelling spirits, pent up in small but active bodies, could not remain long in a little place like San Domingo without some collision. The island of Jamaica, which had been assigned to them in common, furnished the first ground of contention; the province of Darien furnished another, each pretending to include it within the limits of his jurisdiction. Their disputes on these points ran so high that the whole place resounded with them. In talking, however, Nicuesa had the advantage; having been brought up in the court, he was more polished and ceremonious, had greater self-command, and probably perplexed his rival governor in argument. Ojeda was no great casuist, but he was an excellent swordsman, and always ready to fight his way through any question of right or dignity which he could not clearly argue with the tongue; so he proposed to settle the dispute by single combat. Nicuesa, though equally brave, was more a man of the world, and saw the folly of such arbitrament. Secretly smiling at the heat of his antagonist, he proposed, as a preliminary to the duel, and to furnish something worth fighting for, that each should deposit five thou-

* Equivalent to 10,650 dollars of the present day.

sand castillanos, to be the prize of the victor. This, as he foresaw, was a temporary check upon the fiery valour of his rival, who did not possess a pistole in his treasury, but probably was too proud to confess it.

It is not likely, however, that the impetuous spirit of Ojeda would long have remained in check, had not the discreet Juan de la Cosa interposed to calm it. It is interesting to notice the great ascendancy possessed by this veteran navigator over his fiery associate. Juan de la Cosa was a man whose strong natural good sense had been quickened by long and hard experience; whose courage was above all question, but tempered by time and trial. He seems to have been personally attached to Ojeda, as veterans who have outlived the rash impulse of youthful valour are apt to love the fiery quality in their younger associates. So long as he accompanied Ojeda in his enterprises, he stood by him as a Mentor in council, and a devoted partisan in danger.

In the present instance the interference of this veteran of the seas had the most salutary effect; he prevented the impending duel of the rival governors, and persuaded them to agree that the river Darien should be the boundary line between their respective jurisdictions.

The dispute relative to Jamaica was settled by the Admiral Don Diego Columbus himself. He had already felt aggrieved by the distribution of these governments by the king, without his consent or even knowledge, being contrary to the privileges which he inherited from his father, the discoverer. It was in vain to contend, however, when the matter was beyond his reach and involved in technical disputes. But as to the island of Jamaica, it in a manner lay at his own door, and he could not brook its being made a matter of gift to these brawling governors. Without waiting the slow and uncertain course of making remonstrances to the king, he took the affair, as a matter of plain right, into his own hands and ordered a brave officer, Juan de Esquibel, the same who had subjugated the province of Higüey, to take possession of that island, with seventy men, and to hold it subject to his command.

Ojeda did not hear of this arrangement until he was on the point of embarking to make sail. In the heat of the moment he loudly defied the power of the admiral, and swore that if he ever found Juan de Esquibel on the island of Jamaica he would strike off his head. The populace present heard this menace, and had too thorough an idea of the fiery and daring character

of Ojeda to doubt that he would carry it into effect. Notwithstanding his bravado, however, Juan de Esquivel proceeded according to his orders to take possession of the island of Jamaica.

The squadron of Nicuesa lingered for some time after the sailing of his rival. His courteous and engaging manners, aided by the rumour of great riches in the province of Veragua, where he intended to found his colony, had drawn numerous volunteers to his standard, insomuch that he had to purchase another ship to convey them.

Nicuesa was more of the courtier and the cavalier than the man of business, and had no skill in managing his pecuniary affairs. He had expended his funds with a free and lavish hand, and involved himself in debts which he had not the immediate means of paying. Many of his creditors knew that his expedition was regarded with an evil eye by the Admiral, Don Diego Columbus; to gain favour with the latter, therefore, they threw all kinds of impediments in the way of Nicuesa. Never was an unfortunate gentleman more harassed and distracted by duns and demands, one plucking at his skirts as soon as the other was satisfied. He succeeded, however, in getting all his forces embarked. He had seven hundred men, well chosen and well armed, together with six horses. He chose Lope de Olano to be his captain-general, a seemingly impolitic appointment, as this Olano had been concerned with the notorious Roldan in his rebellion against Columbus.

The squadron sailed out of the harbour and put to sea, excepting one ship, which, with anchor a-trip and sails unfurled, waited to receive Nicuesa, who was detained on shore until the last moment by the perplexities which had been artfully multiplied around him.

Just as he was on the point of stepping into his boat he was arrested by the harpies of the law, and carried before the Alcalde Mayor to answer a demand for five hundred ducats, which he was ordered to pay on the spot, or prepare to go to prison.

This was a thunderstroke to the unfortunate cavalier. In vain he represented his utter incapacity to furnish such a sum at the moment; in vain he represented the ruin that would accrue to himself and the vast injury to the public service, should he be prevented from joining his expedition. The Alcalde Mayor was inflexible, and Nicuesa was reduced to despair. At this critical moment relief came from a most unex-

pected quarter. The heart of a public notary was melted by his distress! He stepped forward in court and declared that rather than see so gallant a gentleman reduced to extremity he himself would pay down the money. Nicuesa gazed at him with astonishment, and could scarcely believe his senses, but when he saw him actually pay off the debt, and found himself suddenly released from this dreadful embarrassment, he embraced his deliverer with tears of gratitude, and hastened with all speed to embark, lest some other legal spell should be laid upon his person.

CHAPTER III.

EXPLOITS AND DISASTERS OF OJEDA ON THE COAST OF CARTHAGENA—FATE OF THE VETERAN JUAN DE LA COSA.—(1509.)

It was on the 10th of November, 1509, that Alonzo de Ojeda, set sail from San Domingo with two ships, two brigantines, and three hundred men. He took with him also twelve brood mares. Among the remarkable adventurers who embarked with him was Francisco Pizarro, who was afterwards renowned as the conqueror of Peru.* Hernando Cortez had likewise intended to sail in the expedition, but was prevented by an inflammation in one of his knees.

The voyage was speedy and prosperous, and they arrived late in the autumn in the harbour of Carthage. The veteran Juan de la Cosa was well acquainted with this place, having sailed as pilot with Rodrigo de Bastides, at the time he discovered it in 1501. He warned Alonzo de Ojeda to be upon his guard, as the natives were a brave and warlike race, of Carib

* Francisco Pizarro was a native of Truxillo in Estremadura. He was the illegitimate fruit of an amour between Gonsalvo Pizarro, a veteran captain of infantry, and a damsel in low life. His childhood was passed in grovelling occupations incident to the humble condition of his mother, and he is said to have been a swineherd. When he had sufficiently increased in years and stature he enlisted as a soldier. His first campaigns may have been against the Moors in the war of Granada. He certainly served in Italy under the banner of the Great Captain, Gonsalvo of Cordova. His roving spirit then induced him to join the bands of adventurers to the New World. He was of ferocious courage, and, when engaged in any enterprise, possessed an obstinate perseverance that was neither to be deterred by danger, weakened by fatigue and hardship, or checked by repeated disappointment. After having conquered the great kingdom of Peru, he was assassinated, at an advanced age, in 1541, defending himself bravely to the last.

origin, far different from the soft and gentle inhabitants of the islands. They wielded great swords of palm-wood, defended themselves with osier targets, and dipped their arrows in the subtle poison. The women, as well as the men, mingled in battle, being expert in drawing the bow and throwing a species of lance called the azagay. The warning was well timed, for the Indians of these parts had been irritated by the misconduct of previous adventurers, and flew to arms on the first appearance of the ships.

Juan de la Cosa now feared for the safety of the enterprise in which he had person, fortune, and official dignity at stake. He earnestly advised Ojeda to abandon this dangerous neighbourhood, and to commence a settlement in the gulf of Uraba, where the people were less ferocious, and did not use poisoned weapons. Ojeda was too proud of spirit to alter his plans through fear of a naked foe. It is thought, too, that he had no objection to a skirmish, being desirous of a pretext to make slaves to be sent to Hispaniola in discharge of the debts he had left unpaid.* He landed, therefore, with a considerable part of his force, and a number of friars, who had been sent out to convert the Indians. His faithful lieutenant, being unable to keep him out of danger, stood by to second him.

Ojeda advanced towards the savages, and ordered the friars to read aloud a certain formula which had recently been digested by profound jurists and divines in Spain. It began in stately form. "I, Alonzo de Ojeda, servant of the most high and mighty sovereigns of Castile and Leon, conquerors of barbarous nations, their messenger and captain, do notify unto you, and make you know, in the best way I can, that God our Lord, one and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, from whom you and we, and all the people of the earth proceeded, and are descendants, as well as those who shall come hereafter." The formula then went on to declare the fundamental principles of the Catholic Faith: the supreme power given to St. Peter over the world and all the human race, and exercised by his representative the pope; the donation made by a late pope of all this part of the world and all its inhabitants, to the Catholic sovereigns of Castile; and the ready obedience which had already been paid by many of its lands and islands and people to the agents and representatives of those sovereigns. It called upon those savages pres-

*Las Casas. Hist. Ind. l. ii. c. 57, MS

ent, therefore, to do the same, to acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrines, the supremacy of the pope, and the sovereignty of the Catholic King, but, in case of refusal, it denounced upon them all the horrors of war, the desolation of their dwellings, the seizure of their property, and the slavery of their wives and children. Such was the extraordinary document, which, from this time forward, was read by the Spanish discoverers to the wondering savages of any newly-found country, as a prelude to sanctify the violence about to be inflicted on them.*

When the friars had read this pious manifesto, Ojeda made signs of amity to the natives, and held up glittering presents; they had already suffered, however, from the cruelties of the white men, and were not to be won by kindness. On the contrary, they brandished their weapons, sounded their conchs, and prepared to make battle.

Juan de la Cosa saw the rising choler of Ojeda, and knew his fiery impatience. He again entreated him to abandon these hostile shores, and reminded him of the venomous weapons of the enemy. It was all in vain: Ojeda confided blindly in the protection of the Virgin. Putting up, as usual, a short prayer to his patroness, he drew his weapon, braced his buckler, and charged furiously upon the savages. Juan de la Cosa followed as heartily as if the battle had been of his own seeking. The Indians were soon routed, a number killed, and several taken prisoners; on their persons were found plates of gold, but of an inferior quality. Flushed by this triumph, Ojeda took several of the prisoners as guides, and pursued the flying enemy four leagues into the interior. He was followed, as usual, by his faithful lieutenant, the veteran La Cosa, continually remonstrating against his useless temerity, but hardily seconding him in the most hare-brained perils. Having penetrated far into the forest, they came to a strong-hold of the enemy, where a numerous force was ready to receive them, armed with clubs, lances, arrows, and bucklers. Ojeda led his men to the charge with the old Castilian war cry, "Santiago!" The savages soon took to flight. Eight of their bravest warriors threw themselves into a cabin, and plied their bows and arrows so vigorously, that the Spaniards were kept at bay. Ojeda cried shame upon his followers to be daunted by eight naked men. Stung

* The reader will find the complete form of this curious manifesto in the appendix.

by this reproach, an old Castilian soldier rushed through a shower of arrows, and forced the door of the cabin, but received a shaft through the heart, and fell dead on the threshold. Ojeda, furious at the sight, ordered fire to be set to the combustible edifice; in a moment it was in a blaze, and the eight warriors perished in the flames.

Seventy Indians were made captive and sent to the ships, and Ojeda, regardless of the remonstrances of Juan de la Cosa, continued his rash pursuit of the fugitives through the forest. In the dusk of the evening they arrived at a village called Yurbaco; the inhabitants of which had fled to the mountains with their wives and children and principal effects. The Spaniards, imagining that the Indians were completely terrified and dispersed, now roved in quest of booty among the deserted houses, which stood distant from each other, buried among the trees. While they were thus scattered, troops of savages rushed forth, with furious yells, from all parts of the forest. The Spaniards endeavoured to gather together and support each other, but every little party was surrounded by a host of foes. They fought with desperate bravery, but for once their valour and their iron armour were of no avail; they were overwhelmed by numbers, and sank beneath war-clubs and poisoned arrows.

Ojeda on the first alarm collected a few soldiers and ensconced himself within a small enclosure, surrounded by palisades. Here he was closely besieged and galled by flights of arrows. He threw himself on his knees, covered himself with his buckler, and, being small and active, managed to protect himself from the deadly shower, but all his companions were slain by his side, some of them perishing in frightful agonies. At this fearful moment the veteran La Cosa, having heard of the peril of his commander, arrived, with a few followers, to his assistance. Stationing himself at the gate of the palisades, the brave Biscayan kept the savages at bay until most of his men were slain and he himself was severely wounded. Just then Ojeda sprang forth like a tiger into the midst of the enemy, dealing his blows on every side. La Cosa would have seconded him, but was crippled by his wounds. He took refuge with the remnant of his men in an Indian cabin; the straw roof of which he aided them to throw off, lest the enemy should set it on fire. Here he defended himself until all his comrades, but one, were destroyed. The subtle poison of his wounds at length overpowered him, and he sank to the ground. Feeling

death at hand, he called to his only surviving companion. "Brother," said he, "since God hath protected thee from harm, sally forth and fly, and if ever thou shouldst see Alonzo de Ojeda, tell him of my fate!"

Thus fell the hardy Juan de la Cosa, faithful and devoted to the very last; nor can we refrain from pausing to pay a passing tribute to his memory. He was acknowledged by his contemporaries to be one of the ablest of those gallant Spanish navigators who first explored the way to the New World. But it is by the honest and kindly qualities of his heart that his memory is most endeared to us; it is, above all, by that loyalty in friendship displayed in this his last and fatal expedition. Warmed by his attachment for a ~~more~~ youthful and a hot-headed adventurer, we see this wary veteran of the seas forgetting his usual prudence and the lessons of his experience, and embarking, heart and hand, purse and person, in the wild enterprises of his favourite. We behold him watching over him as a parent, remonstrating with him as a counsellor, but fighting by him as a partisan; following him, without hesitation, into known and needless danger, to certain death itself, and showing no other solicitude in his dying moments but to be remembered by his friend.

The histories of these Spanish discoveries abound in noble and generous traits of character, but few have charmed us more than this instance of loyalty to the last gasp, in the death of the staunch Juan de la Cosa. The Spaniard who escaped to tell the story of his end was the only survivor of seventy that had followed Ojeda in this rash and headlong inroad.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRIVAL OF NICUESA—VENGEANCE TAKEN ON THE INDIANS.

WHILE these disastrous occurrences happened on shore, great alarm began to be felt on board of the ships. Days had elapsed since the party had adventured so rashly into the wilderness; yet nothing had been seen or heard of them, and the forest spread a mystery over their fate. Some of the Spaniards ventured a little distance into the woods, but were deterred by the distant shouts and yells of the savages, and the noise of

their conchs and drums. Armed detachments then coasted the shore in boats, landing occasionally, climbing the rocks and promontories, firing signal-guns, and sounding trumpets. It was all in vain; they heard nothing but the echoes of their own noises, or perhaps the wild whoop of an Indian from the bosom of the forest. At length, when they were about to give up the search in despair, they came to a great thicket of mangrove trees on the margin of the sea. These trees grow within the water, but their roots rise, and are intertwined, above the surface. In this entangled and almost impervious grove, they caught a glimpse of a man in Spanish attire. They entered, and, to their astonishment, found it to be Alonzo de Ojeda. He was lying on the matted roots of the mangroves, his buckler on his shoulder, and his sword in his hand; but so wasted with hunger and fatigue that he could not speak. They bore him to the firm land; made a fire on the shore to warm him, for he was chilled with the damp and cold of his hiding-place, and when he was a little revived they gave him food and wine. In this way he gradually recovered strength to tell his doleful story.*

He had succeeded in cutting his way through the host of savages, and attaining the woody skirts of the mountains; but when he found himself alone, and that all his brave men had been cut off, he was ready to yield up in despair. Bitterly did he reproach himself for having disregarded the advice of the veteran La Cosa, and deeply did he deplore the loss of that loyal follower, who had fallen a victim to his devotion. He scarce knew which way to bend his course, but continued on, in the darkness of the night and of the forest, until out of hearing of the yells of triumph uttered by the savages over the bodies of his men. When the day broke, he sought the rudest parts of the mountains, and hid himself until the night; then struggling forward among rocks, and precipices, and matted forests, he made his way to the sea-side, but was too much exhausted to reach the ships. Indeed it was wonderful that one

* The picture here given is so much like romance, that the author quotes his authority at length:—"Llegaron adonde havia, junto al agua de la mar, unos Manglares, que son arboles, que siempre nacen, i crecen i permanecen dentro del agua de la mar, con grandes raices, asidas, i enmarañadas unas con otras, i alli metido, i escondido hallaron à Alonzo de Ojeda, con su espada en la mano, i la rodela en las espaldas, i en ella sobre trecientas señales de flechazos. Estabo descaido de hambre, que no podia hechar de si la habla; i si no fuera tan robusto, aunque chico de cuerpo, fuera muerto."

Las Casas. l. ii. c. 58. MS. Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. i. l. vii. c. xv.

so small of frame should have been able to endure such great hardships; but he was of admirable strength and hardihood. His followers considered his escape from death as little less than miraculous, and he himself regarded it as another proof of the special protection of the Virgin; for, though he had, as usual, received no wound, yet it is said his buckler bore the dints of upwards of three hundred arrows.*

While the Spaniards were yet on the shore, administering to the recovery of their commander, they beheld a squadron of ships standing towards the harbour of Carthagena, and soon perceived them to be the ships of Nicuesa. Ojeda was troubled in mind at the sight, recollecting his late intemperate defiance of that cavalier; and, reflecting that, should he seek him in enmity, he was in no situation to maintain his challenge or defend himself. He ordered his men, therefore, to return on board the ships and leave him alone on the shore, and not to reveal the place of his retreat while Nicuesa should remain in the harbour.

As the squadron entered the harbour, the boats sallied forth to meet it. The first inquiry of Nicuesa was concerning Ojeda. The followers of the latter replied, mournfully, that their commander had gone on a warlike expedition into the country, but days had elapsed without his return, so that they feared some misfortune had befallen him. They entreated Nicuesa, therefore, to give his word, as a cavalier, that should Ojeda really be in distress, he would not take advantage of his misfortunes to revenge himself for their late disputes.

Nicuesa, who was a gentleman of noble and generous spirit, blushed with indignation at such a request. "Seek your commander instantly," said he; "bring him to me if he be alive; and I pledge myself not merely to forget the past, but to aid him as if he were a brother.†

When they met, Nicuesa received his late foe with open arms. "It is not," said he, "for *Hidalgos*, like men of vulgar souls, to remember past differences when they behold one another in distress. Henceforth, let all that has occurred between us be forgotten. Command me as a brother. Myself and my men are at your orders, to follow you wherever you please, until the deaths of Juan de la Cosa and his comrades are revenged."

The spirits of Ojeda were once more lifted up by this gallant

‡ Las Casas, ubi sup.

† Ibid.

and generous offer. The two governors, no longer rivals, landed four hundred of their men and several horses, and set off with all speed for the fatal village. They approached it in the night, and, dividing their forces into two parties, gave orders that not an Indian should be taken alive.

The village was buried in deep sleep, but the woods were filled with large parrots, which, being awakened, made a prodigious clamour. The Indians, however, thinking the Spaniards all destroyed, paid no attention to these noises. It was not until their houses were assailed, and wrapped in flames, that they took the alarm. They rushed forth, some with arms, some weaponless, but were received at their doors by the exasperated Spaniards, and either slain on the spot, or driven back into the fire. Women fled wildly forth with children in their arms, but at sight of the Spaniards glittering in steel, and of the horses, which they supposed ravenous monsters, they ran back, shrieking with horror, into their burning habitations. Great was the carnage, for no quarter was shown to age or sex. Many perished by the fire, and many by the sword.

When they had fully glutted their vengeance, the Spaniards ranged about for booty. While thus employed, they found the body of the unfortunate Juan de la Cosa. It was tied to a tree, but swoln and discoloured in a hideous manner by the poison of the arrows with which he had been slain. This dismal spectacle had such an effect upon the common men, that not one would remain in that place during the night. Having sacked the village, therefore, they left it a smoking ruin, and returned in triumph to their ships. The spoil in gold and other articles of value must have been great, for the share of Nicuesa and his men amounted to the value of seven thousand castillanos.* The two governors, now faithful confederates, parted with many expressions of friendship, and with mutual admiration of each other's prowess, and Nicuesa continued his voyage for the coast of Veragua.

* Equivalent to 37,281 dollars of the present day.

CHAPTER V.

OJEDA FOUNDS THE COLONY OF SAN SEBASTIAN—BELEAGUERED BY THE INDIANS.

OJEDA now adopted, though tardily, the advice of his unfortunate lieutenant, Juan de la Cosa, and, giving up all thoughts of colonising this disastrous part of the coast, steered his course for the Gulf of Uraba. He sought for some time the river Darien, famed among the Indians as abounding in gold, but not finding it, landed in various places, seeking a favourable site for his intended colony. His people were disheartened by the disasters they had already undergone, and the appearance of surrounding objects was not calculated to reassure them. The country, though fertile and covered with rich and beautiful vegetation, was in their eyes a land of cannibals and monsters. They began to dread the strength as well as fierceness of the savages, who could transfix a man with their arrows even when covered with armour, and whose shafts were tipped with deadly poison. They heard the howlings of tigers, panthers, and, as they thought, lions in the forests, and encountered large and venomous serpents among the rocks and thickets. As they were passing along the banks of a river, one of their horses was seized by the leg by an enormous alligator, and dragged beneath the waves.*

At length Ojeda fixed upon a place for his town on a height at the east side of the Gulf. Here, landing all that could be spared from the ships, he began with all diligence to erect houses, giving this embryo capital of his province the name of San Sebastian, in honour of that sainted martyr, who was slain by arrows; hoping he might protect the inhabitants from the empoisoned shafts of the savages. As a further protection he erected a large wooden fortress, and surrounded the place with a stockade. Feeling, however, the inadequacy of his handful of men to contend with the hostile tribes around him, he despatched a ship to Hispaniola, with a letter to the Bachelor, Martin Fernandez de Enciso, his Alcalde Mayor, informing him of his having established his seat of government, and urging him to lose no time in joining him with all the recruits, arms,

* Herrera, Hist. Ind, D. i. l. vii. c. xvi.

and provisions he could command. By the same ship he transmitted to San Domingo all the captives and gold he had collected.

His capital being placed in a posture of defence, Ojeda now thought of making a progress through his wild territory, and set out, accordingly, with an armed band, to pay a friendly visit to a neighbouring cacique, reputed as possessing great treasures of gold. The natives, however, had by this time learnt the nature of these friendly visits, and were prepared to resist them. Scarcely had the Spaniards entered into the defiles of the surrounding forest when they were assailed by flights of arrows from the close coverts of the thickets. Some were shot dead on the spot; others, less fortunate, expired raving with the torments of the poison; the survivors, filled with horror at the sight, and losing all presence of mind, retreated in confusion to the fortress.

It was some time before Ojeda could again persuade his men to take the field, so great was their dread of the poisoned weapons of the Indians. At length their provisions began to fail, and they were compelled to forage among the villages in search, not of gold, but of food.

In one of their expeditions they were surprised by an ambuscade of savages in a gorge of the mountains, and attacked with such fury and effect, that they were completely routed and pursued with yells and howlings to the very gates of St. Sebastian. Many died in excruciating agony of their wounds, and others recovered with extreme difficulty. Those who were well no longer dared to venture forth in search of food; for the whole forest teemed with lurking foes. They devoured such herbs and roots as they could find without regard to their quality. The humors of their bodies became corrupted, and various diseases, combined with the ravages of famine, daily thinned their numbers. The sentinel who feebly mounted guard at night was often found dead at his post in the morning. Some stretched themselves on the ground and expired of mere famine and debility; nor was death any longer regarded as an evil, but rather as a welcome relief from a life of horror and despair.

CHAPTER VI.

ALONZO DE OJEDA SUPPOSED BY THE SAVAGES TO HAVE A
CHARMED LIFE—THEIR EXPERIMENT TO TRY THE FACT.

IN the mean time the Indians continued to harass the garrison, lying in wait to surprise the foraging parties, cutting off all stragglers, and sometimes approaching the walls in open defiance. On such occasions Ojeda sallied forth at the head of his men, and, from his great agility, was the first to overtake the retreating foe. He slew more of their warriors with his single arm than all his followers together. Though often exposed to showers of arrows, none had ever wounded him, and the Indians began to think he had a charmed life. Perhaps they had heard from fugitive prisoners the idea entertained by himself and his followers of his being under supernatural protection. Determined to ascertain the fact, they placed four of their most dexterous archers in ambush with orders to single him out. A number of them advanced towards the fort sounding their conchs and drums and uttering yells of defiance. As they expected, the impetuous Ojeda sallied forth immediately at the head of his men. The Indians fled towards the ambuscade, drawing him in furious pursuit. The archers waited until he was full in front, and then launched their deadly shafts. Three struck his buckler and glanced harmlessly off, but the fourth pierced his thigh. Satisfied that he was wounded beyond the possibility of cure, the savages retreated with shouts of triumph.

Ojeda was borne back to the fortress in great anguish of body and despondency of spirit. For the first time in his life he had lost blood in battle. The charm in which he had hitherto confided was broken; or rather, the Holy Virgin appeared to have withdrawn her protection. He had the horrible death of his followers before his eyes, who had perished of their wounds in raving frenzy.

One of the symptoms of the poison was to shoot a thrilling chill through the wounded part; from this circumstance, perhaps, a remedy suggested itself to the imagination of Ojeda, which few but himself could have had the courage to undergo. He caused two plates of iron to be made red hot, and ordered a surgeon to apply them to each orifice of the wound. The surgeon shuddered and refused, saying he would not be the mur-

derer of his general.* Upon this Ojeda made a solemn vow that he would hang him unless he obeyed. To avoid the gallows, the surgeon applied the glowing plates. Ojeda refused to be tied down, or that any one should hold him during this frightful operation. He endured it without shrinking or uttering a murmur, although it so inflamed his whole system, that they had to wrap him in sheets steeped in vinegar to allay the burning heat which raged throughout his body; and we are assured that a barrel of vinegar was exhausted for the purpose. The desperate remedy succeeded: the cold poison, says Bishop Las Casas, was consumed by the vivid fire.† How far the venerable historian is correct in his postulate, surgeons may decide; but many incredulous persons will be apt to account for the cure by surmising that the arrow was not envenomed.

CHAPTER VII.

ARRIVAL OF A STRANGE SHIP AT SAN SEBASTIAN.

ALONZO DE OJEDA, though pronounced out of danger, was still disabled by his wound, and his helpless situation completed the despair of his companions; for, while he was in health and vigour, his buoyant and mercurial spirit, his active, restless, and enterprising habits, imparted animation, if not confidence, to every one around him. The only hope of relief was from the sea, and that was nearly extinct, when, one day, to the unspeakable joy of the Spaniards, a sail appeared on the horizon. It made for the port and dropped anchor at the foot of the height of San Sebastian, and there was no longer a doubt that it was the promised succour from San Domingo.

The ship came indeed from the island of Hispaniola, but it had not been fitted out by the Bachelor Enciso. The commander's name was Bernardino de Talavera. This man was one of the loose, heedless adventurers who abounded in San Domingo. His carelessness and extravagance had involved him in debt, and he was threatened with a prison. In the height of his difficulties the ship arrived which Ojeda had

* Charlevoix, *ut sup.*, p. 293.

† Las Casas, *Hist. Ind. lib. ii. c. 59, MS.*

sent to San Domingo, freighted with slaves and gold, an earnest of the riches to be found at San Sebastian. Bernardino de Talavera immediately conceived the project of giving his creditors the slip and escaping to this new settlement. He understood that Ojeda was in need of recruits, and felt assured that, from his own reckless conduct in money-matters, he would sympathize with any one harassed by debt. He drew into his schemes a number of desperate debtors like himself, nor was he scrupulous about filling his ranks with recruits whose legal embarrassments arose from more criminal causes. Never did a more vagabond crew engage in a project of colonization.

How to provide themselves with a vessel was now the question. They had neither money nor credit; but then they had cunning and courage, and were troubled by no scruples of conscience; thus qualified, a knave will often succeed better for a time than an honest man; it is in the long run that he fails, as will be illustrated in the case of Talavera and his hopeful associates. While casting about for means to escape to San Sebastian they heard of a vessel belonging to certain Genoese, which was at Cape Tiburon, at the western extremity of the island, taking in a cargo of bacon and casava bread for San Domingo. Nothing could have happened more opportunely: here was a ship amply stored with provisions, and ready to their hand; they had nothing to do but seize it and embark.

The gang, accordingly, seventy in number, made their way separately and secretly to Cape Tiburon, where, assembling at an appointed time and place, they boarded the vessel, overpowered the crew, weighed anchor, and set sail. They were heedless, hap-hazard mariners, and knew little of the management of a vessel; the historian Charlevoix thinks, therefore, that it was a special providence that guided them to San Sebastian. Whether or not the good father is right in his opinion, it is certain that the arrival of the ship rescued the garrison from the very brink of destruction.*

Talavera and his gang, though they had come lightly by their prize, were not disposed to part with it as frankly, but demanded to be paid down in gold for the provisions furnished to the starving colonists. Ojeda agreed to their terms, and taking the supplies into his possession, dealt them out sparingly to his companions. Several of his hungry followers were

* Hist. S. Domingo, lib. iv.

dissatisfied with their portions, and even accused Ojeda of unfairness in reserving an undue share for himself. Perhaps there may have been some ground for this charge, arising, not from any selfishness in the character of Ojeda, but from one of those superstitious fancies with which his mind was tinged; for we are told that, for many years, he had been haunted by a presentiment that he should eventually die of hunger.*

This lurking horror of the mind may have made him depart from his usual free and lavish spirit in doling out these providential supplies, and may have induced him to set by an extra portion for himself, as a precaution against his anticipated fate; certain it is that great clamours rose among his people, some of whom threatened to return in the pirate vessel to Hispaniola. He succeeded, however, in pacifying them for the present, by representing the necessity of husbanding their supplies, and by assuring them that the Bachelor Enciso could not fail soon to arrive, when there would be provisions in abundance.

CHAPTER VIII.

FACTIONS IN THE COLONY—A CONVENTION MADE.

DAYS and days elapsed, but no relief arrived at San Sebastian. The Spaniards kept a ceaseless watch upon the sea, but the promised ship failed to appear. With all the husbandry of Ojeda the stock of provisions was nearly consumed; famine again prevailed, and several of the garrison perished through their various sufferings and their lack of sufficient nourishment. The survivors now became factious in their misery, and a plot was formed among them to seize upon one of the vessels in the harbour and make sail for Hispaniola.

Ojeda discovered their intentions, and was reduced to great perplexity. He saw that to remain here without relief from abroad was certain destruction, yet he clung to his desperate enterprise. It was his only chance for fortune or command; for should this settlement be broken up he might try in vain, with his exhausted means and broken credit, to obtain another post or to set on foot another expedition. Ruin in fact would overwhelm him, should he return without success.

* Herrera, Decad. l. 1 viii. c. 3.

He exerted himself, therefore, to the utmost to pacify his men; representing the folly of abandoning a place where they had established a foothold, and where they only needed a reinforcement to enable them to control the surrounding country, and to make themselves masters of its riches. Finding they still demurred, he offered, now that he was sufficiently recovered from his wound, to go himself to San Domingo in quest of reinforcements and supplies.

This offer had the desired effect. Such confidence had the people in the energy, ability, and influence of Ojeda, that they felt assured of relief should he seek it in person. They made a kind of convention with him, therefore, in which it was agreed that they should remain quietly at Sebastian's for the space of fifty days. At the end of this time, in case no tidings had been received of Ojeda, they were to be at liberty to abandon the settlement and return in the brigantines to Hispaniola. In the mean time Francisco Pizarro was to command the colony as Lieutenant of Ojeda, until the arrival of his Alcalde Mayor, the Bachelor Enciso. This convention being made, Ojeda embarked in the ship of Bernardino de Talavera. That cut-purse of the ocean and his loose-handed crew were effectually cured of their ambition to colonize. Disappointed in the hope of finding abundant wealth at San Sebastian's, and dismayed at the perils and horrors of the surrounding wilderness, they preferred returning to Hispaniola, even at the risk of chains and dungeons. Doubtless they thought that the influence of Ojeda would be sufficient to obtain their pardon, especially as their timely succour had been the salvation of the colony.

CHAPTER IX.

DISASTROUS VOYAGE OF OJEDA IN THE PIRATE SHIP.

OJEDA had scarce put to sea in the ship of these freebooters, when a fierce quarrel arose between him and Talavera. Accustomed to take the lead among his companions, still feeling himself governor, and naturally of a domineering spirit, Ojeda, on coming on board, had assumed the command as a matter of course. Talavera, who claimed dominion over the ship, by the right, no doubt, of trove and conversion, or, in other words, of downright piracy, resisted this usurpation.

Ojeda, as usual, would speedily have settled the question by the sword, but he had the whole vagabond crew against him, who overpowered him with numbers and threw him in irons. Still his swelling spirit was unsubdued. He reviled Talavera and his gang as recreants, traitors, pirates, and offered to fight the whole of them successively, provided they would give him a clear deck, and come on two at a time. Notwithstanding his diminutive size, they had too high an idea of his prowess, and had heard too much of his exploits, to accept his challenge; so they kept him raging in his chains while they pursued their voyage.

They had not proceeded far, however, when a violent storm arose. Talavera and his crew knew little of navigation, and were totally ignorant of those seas. The raging of the elements, the baffling winds and currents, and the danger of unknown rocks and shoals filled them with confusion and alarm. They knew not whither they were driving before the storm, or where to seek for shelter. In this hour of peril they called to mind that Ojeda was a sailor as well as soldier, and that he had repeatedly navigated these seas. Making a truce, therefore, for the common safety, they took off his irons, on condition that he would pilot the vessel during the remainder of her voyage.

Ojeda acquitted himself with his accustomed spirit and intrepidity; but the vessel had been already swept so far to the westward that all his skill was ineffectual in endeavouring to work up to Hispaniola against storms and adverse currents. Borne away by the gulf stream, and tempest-tost for many days, until the shattered vessel was almost in a foundering condition, he saw no alternative but to run it on shore on the southern coast of Cuba.

Here then the crew of freebooters landed from their prize in more desperate plight than when they first took possession of it. They were on a wild and unfrequented coast, their vessel lay a wreck upon the sands, and their only chance was to travel on foot to the eastern extremity of the island, and seek some means of crossing to Hispaniola, where, after their toils, they might perhaps only arrive to be thrown into a dungeon. Such, however, is the yearning of civilized men after the haunts of cultivated society, that they set out, at every risk, upon their long and painful journey.

CHAPTER X.

TOILSOME MARCH OF OJEDA AND HIS COMPANIONS THROUGH THE MORASSES OF CUBA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the recent services of Ojeda, the crew of Talavera still regarded him with hostility; but, if they had felt the value of his skill and courage at sea, they were no less sensible of their importance on shore, and he soon acquired that ascendancy over them which belongs to a master-spirit in time of trouble.

Cuba was as yet uncolonized. It was a place of refuge to the unhappy natives of Hayti, who fled hither from the whips and chains of their European task-masters. The forests abounded with these wretched fugitives, who often opposed themselves to the shipwrecked party, supposing them to be sent by their late masters to drag them back to captivity.

Ojeda easily repulsed these attacks; but found that these fugitives had likewise inspired the villagers with hostility to all European strangers. Seeing that his companions were too feeble and disheartened to fight their way through the populous parts of the island, or to climb the rugged mountains of the interior, he avoided all towns and villages, and led them through the close forests and broad green savannahs which extended between the mountains and the sea.

He had only made choice of evils. The forests gradually retired from the coast. The savannahs, where the Spaniards at first had to contend merely with long rank grass and creeping vines, soon ended in salt marshes, where the oozy bottom yielded no firm foot-hold, and the mud and water reached to their knees. Still they pressed forward, continually hoping in a little while to arrive at a firmer soil, and flattering themselves they beheld fresh meadow land before them, but continually deceived. The farther they proceeded, the deeper grew the mire, until, after they had been eight days on this dismal journey they found themselves in the centre of a vast morass where the water reached to their girdles. Though thus almost drowned, they were tormented with incessant thirst, for all the water around them was as briny as the

ocean. They suffered too the cravings of extreme hunger, having but a scanty supply of cassava bread and cheese, and a few potatoes and other roots, which they devoured raw. When they wished to sleep they had to climb among the twisted roots of mangrove trees, which grew in clusters in the waters. Still the dreary marsh widened and deepened. In many places they had to cross rivers and inlets; where some, who could not swim, were drowned, and others were smothered in the mire.

Their situation became wild and desperate. Their cassava bread was spoiled by the water, and their stock of roots nearly exhausted. The interminable morass still extended before them, while, to return, after the distance they had come, was hopeless. Ojeda alone kept up a resolute spirit, and cheered and urged them forward. He had the little Flemish painting of the Madonna, which had been given him by the Bishop Fonseca, carefully stored among the provisions in his knapsack. Whenever he stopped to repose among the roots of the mangrove trees, he took out this picture, placed it among the branches, and kneeling, prayed devoutly to the Virgin for protection. This he did repeatedly in the course of the day, and prevailed upon his companions to follow his example. Nay, more, at a moment of great despondency he made a solemn vow to his patroness, that if she conducted him alive through this peril, he would erect a chapel in the first Indian village he should arrive at; and leave her picture there to remain an object of adoration to the Gentiles.*

This frightful morass extended for the distance of thirty leagues, and was so deep and difficult, so entangled by roots and creeping vines, so cut up by creeks and rivers, and so beset by quagmires, that they were thirty days in traversing it. Out of the number of seventy men that set out from the ship but thirty-five remained. "Certain it is," observes the venerable Las Casas, "the sufferings of the Spaniards in the New World, in search of wealth, have been more cruel and severe than ever nation in the world endured; but those experienced by Ojeda and his men have surpassed all others."

They were at length so overcome by hunger and fatigue, that some lay down and yielded up the ghost, and others seating themselves among the mangrove trees, waited in despair for death to put an end to their miseries. Ojeda, with a few of

* Las Casas, *Hist. Ind.* l. ii. c. 60, MS.

the lightest and most vigorous, continued to struggle forward, and, to their unutterable joy, at length arrived to where the land was firm and dry. They soon descried a foot-path, and, following it, arrived at an Indian village, commanded by a cacique called Cueybás. No sooner did they reach the village than they sank to the earth exhausted.

The Indians gathered round and gazed at them with wonder; but when they learnt their story, they exhibited a humanity that would have done honour to the most professing Christians. They bore them to their dwellings, set meat and drink before them, and vied with each other in discharging the offices of the kindest humanity. Finding that a number of their companions were still in the morass, the cacique sent a large party of Indians with provisions for their relief, with orders to bring on their shoulders such as were too feeble to walk. "The Indians," says the Bishop Las Casas, "did more than they were ordered; for so they always do, when they are not exasperated by ill treatment. The Spaniards were brought to the village, succoured, cherished, consoled, and almost worshipped as if they had been angels."

CHAPTER XI.

OJEDA PERFORMS HIS VOW TO THE VIRGIN.

BEING recovered from his sufferings, Alonzo de Ojeda prepared to perform his vow concerning the picture of the Virgin, though sorely must it have grieved him to part with a relique to which he attributed his deliverance from so many perils. He built a little hermitage or oratory in the village, and furnished it with an altar, above which he placed the picture. He then summoned the benevolent cacique, and explained to him as well as his limited knowledge of the language, or the aid of interpreters would permit, the main points of the Catholic faith, and especially the history of the Virgin, whom he represented as the mother of the Deity that reigned in the skies, and the great advocate for mortal man.

The worthy cacique listened to him with mute attention, and though he might not clearly comprehend the doctrine, yet he conceived a profound veneration for the picture. The sentiment was shared by his subjects. They kept the little oratory

always swept clean, and decorated it with cotton hangings, laboured by their own hands, and with various votive offerings. They composed couplets or areytos in honour of the Virgin, which they sang to the accompaniment of rude musical instruments, dancing to the sound under the groves which surrounded the hermitage.

A further anecdote concerning this relique may not be unacceptable. The venerable Las Casas, who records these facts, informs us that he arrived at the village of Cueybás sometime after the departure of Ojeda. He found the oratory preserved with the most religious care, as a sacred place, and the picture of the Virgin regarded with fond adoration. The poor Indians crowded to attend mass, which he performed at the altar; they listened attentively to his paternal instructions, and at his request brought their children to be baptized. The good Las Casas, having heard much of this famous relique of Ojeda, was desirous of obtaining possession of it, and offered to give the cacique in exchange an image of the Virgin which he had brought with him. The chieftain made an evasive answer, and seemed much troubled in mind. The next morning he did not make his appearance.

Las Casas went to the oratory to perform mass, but found the altar stripped of its precious relique. On inquiring, he learnt that in the night the cacique had fled to the woods, bearing off with him his beloved picture of the Virgin. It was in vain that Las Casas sent messengers after him, assuring him that he should not be deprived of the relique, but on the contrary, that the image should likewise be presented to him. The cacique refused to venture from the fastnesses of the forest, nor did he return to his village and replace the picture in the oratory until after the departure of the Spaniards.*

CHAPTER XII.

ARRIVAL OF OJEDA AT JAMAICA—HIS RECEPTION BY JUAN DE ESQUIBEL.

WHEN the Spaniards were completely restored to health and strength, they resumed their journey. The cacique sent a large body of his subjects to carry their provisions and knap-

* Las Casas, *Hist. Ind.*, c. 61, MS.—Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* d. i. l. ix. c. xv.

sacks, and to guide them across a desert tract of country to the province of Macaca, where Christopher Columbus had been hospitably entertained on his voyage along this coast. They experienced equal kindness from its cacique and his people, for such seems to have been almost invariably the case with the natives of these islands, before they had held much intercourse with the Europeans.

The province of Macaca was situated at Cape de la Cruz, the nearest point to the island of Jamaica. Here Ojeda learnt that there were Spaniards settled on that island, being in fact the party commanded by the very Juan de Esquibel whose head he had threatened to strike off, when departing in swelling style from San Domingo. It seemed to be the fortune of Ojeda to have his bravadoes visited on his head in times of trouble and humiliation. He found himself compelled to apply for succour to the very man he had so vain-gloriously menaced. This was no time, however, to stand on points of pride; he procured a canoe and Indians from the cacique of Macaca, and one Pedro de Ordas undertook the perilous voyage of twenty leagues in the frail bark, and arrived safe at Jamaica.

No sooner did Esquibel receive the message of Ojeda, than, forgetting past menaces, he instantly despatched a caravel to bring to him the unfortunate discoverer and his companions. He received him with the utmost kindness, lodged him in his own house, and treated him in all things with the most delicate attention. He was a gentleman who had seen prosperous days, but had fallen into adversity and been buffeted about the world, and had learnt how to respect the feelings of a proud spirit in distress. Ojeda had the warm, touchy heart to feel such conduct; he remained several days with Esquibel in frank communion, and when he sailed for San Domingo they parted the best of friends.

And here we cannot but remark the singular difference in character and conduct of these Spanish adventurers when dealing with each other, or with the unhappy natives. Nothing could be more chivalrous, urbane, and charitable; nothing more pregnant with noble sacrifices of passion and interest, with magnanimous instances of forgiveness of injuries and noble contests of generosity, than the transactions of the discoverers with each other; but the moment they turned to treat with the Indians, even with brave and high-minded caciques, they were vindictive, blood-thirsty, and implacable. The very Juan de Esquibel, who could requite the recent hostility of

Ojeda with such humanity and friendship, was the same who, under the government of Ovando, laid desolate the province of Higüey in Hispaniola, and inflicted atrocious cruelties upon its inhabitants.

When Alonzo de Ojeda set sail for San Domingo, Bernardino de Talavera and his rabble adherents remained at Jamaica. They feared to be brought to account for their piratical exploit in stealing the Genoese vessel, and that in consequence of their recent violence to Ojeda, they would find in him an accuser rather than an advocate. The latter, however, in the opinion of Las Casas, who knew him well, was not a man to make accusations. With all his faults he did not harbour malice. He was quick and fiery, it is true, and his sword was too apt to leap from its scabbard on the least provocation; but after the first flash all was over, and, if he cooled upon an injury, he never sought for vengeance.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARRIVAL OF ALONZO DE OJEDA AT SAN DOMINGO—CONCLUSION OF HIS STORY.

ON arriving at San Domingo the first inquiry of Alonzo de Ojeda was after the Bachelor Enciso. He was told that he had departed long before, with abundant supplies for the colony, and that nothing had been heard of him since his departure. Ojeda waited for a time, in hopes of hearing, by some return ship, of the safe arrival of the Bachelor at San Sebastian. No tidings, however, arrived, and he began to fear that he had been lost in those storms which had beset himself on his return voyage.

Anxious for the relief of his settlement, and fearing that, by delay, his whole scheme of colonization would be defeated, he now endeavoured to set on foot another armament, and to enlist a new set of adventurers. His efforts, however, were all ineffectual. The disasters of his colony were known, and his own circumstances were considered desperate. He was doomed to experience the fate that too often attends sanguine and brilliant projectors. The world is dazzled by them for a time, and hails them as heroes while successful; but misfortune dissipates

the charm, and they become stigmatized with the appellation of adventurers. When Ojeda figured in San Domingo as the conqueror of Coanabo, as the commander of a squadron, as the governor of a province, his prowess and exploits were the theme of every tongue. When he set sail, in vaunting style, for his seat of government, setting the viceroy at defiance, and threatening the life of Esquibel, every one thought that fortune was at his beck, and he was about to accomplish wonders. A few months had elapsed, and he walked the streets of San Domingo a needy man, shipwrecked in hope and fortune. His former friends, dreading some new demand upon their purses, looked coldly on him; his schemes, once so extolled, were now pronounced wild and chimerical, and he was subjected to all kinds of slights and humiliations in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest vain-glory.

While Ojeda was thus lingering at San Domingo, the Admiral, Don Diego Columbus, sent a party of soldiers to Jamaica to arrest Talavera and his pirate crew. They were brought in chains to San Domingo, thrown into dungeons, and tried for the robbery of the Genoese vessel. Their crime was too notorious to admit of doubt, and being convicted, Talavera and several of his principal accomplices were hanged. Such was the end of their frightful journey by sea and land. Never had vagabonds travelled farther or toiled harder to arrive at a gal-lows!

In the course of the trial Ojeda had naturally been summoned as a witness, and his testimony must have tended greatly to the conviction of the culprits. This drew upon him the vengeance of the surviving comrades of Talavera, who still lurked about San Domingo: As he was returning home one night at a late hour he was waylaid and set upon by a number of these miscreants. He displayed his usual spirit. Setting his back against a wall, and drawing his sword, he defended himself admirably against the whole gang; nor was he content with beating them off, but pursued them for some distance through the streets; and having thus put them to utter rout, returned tranquil and unharmed to his lodgings.

This is the last achievement recorded of the gallant, but reckless, Ojeda; for here his bustling career terminated, and he sank into the obscurity that gathers round a ruined man. His health was broken by the various hardships he had sustained, and by the lurking effects of the wound received at San Sebastian, which had been but imperfectly cured. Poverty and ne-

glect, and the corroding sickness of the heart, contributed, no less than the maladies of the body, to quench that sanguine and fiery temper, which had hitherto been the secret of his success, and to render him the mere wreck of his former self; for there is no ruin so hopeless and complete as that of a towering spirit humiliated and broken down. He appears to have lingered some time at San Domingo. Gomara, in his history of the Indies, affirms that he turned monk, and entered in the convent at San Francisco, where he died. Such a change would not have been surprising in a man who, in his wildest career, mingled the bigot with the soldier; nor was it unusual with military adventurers in those days, after passing their youth in the bustle and licentiousness of the camp, to end their days in the quiet and mortification of the cloister. Las Casas, however, who was at San Domingo at the time, makes no mention of the fact, as he certainly would have done had it taken place. He confirms, however, all that has been said of the striking reverse in his character and circumstances; and he adds an affecting picture of his last moments, which may serve as a wholesome comment on his life. He died so poor, that he did not leave money enough to provide for his interment; and so broken in spirit, that, with his last breath, he entreated his body might be buried in the monastery of San Francisco, just at the portal, in humble expiation of his past pride, "*that every one who entered might tread upon his grave.*"*

Such was the fate of Alonzo de Ojeda,—and who does not forget his errors and his faults at the threshold of his humble and untimely grave! He was one of the most fearless and aspiring of that band of "Ocean chivalry" that followed the footsteps of Columbus. His story presents a lively picture of the daring enterprises, the extravagant exploits, the thousand accidents, by flood and field, that chequered the life of a Spanish cavalier in that roving and romantic age.

"Never," says Charlevoix, "was man more suited for a coup-de-main, or to achieve and suffer great things under the direction of another: none had a heart more lofty, or ambition more aspiring; none ever took less heed of fortune, or showed greater firmness of soul, or found more resources in his own courage; but none was less calculated to be commander-in-chief of a great enterprise. Good management and good fortune for ever failed him."†

* Las Casas, ubi sup.

† Charlevoix, Hist. S. Doming.

THE VOYAGE OF DIEGO DE NICUESA.

CHAPTER I.

NICUESA SAILS TO THE WESTWARD—HIS SHIPWRECK AND SUBSEQUENT DISASTERS.

WE have now to recount the fortunes experienced by the gallant and generous Diego de Nicuesa, after his parting from Alonzo de Ojeda at Carthagena. On resuming his voyage he embarked in a caravel, that he might be able to coast the land and reconnoitre; he ordered that the two brigantines, one of which was commanded by his lieutenant, Lope de Olano, should keep near to him, while the large vessels, which drew more water, should stand further out to sea. The squadron arrived upon the coast of Veragua, in stormy weather, and, as Nicuesa could not find any safe harbour, and was apprehensive of rocks and shoals, he stood out to sea at the approach of night, supposing that Lope de Olano would follow him with the brigantines according to his orders. The night was boisterous, the caravel was much tossed and driven about, and when the morning dawned, not one of the squadron was in sight.

Nicuesa feared some accident had befallen the brigantines; he stood for the land and coasted along it in search of them until he came to a large river, into which he entered and came to anchor. He had not been here long when the stream suddenly subsided, having merely been swoln by the rains. Before he had time to extricate himself the caravel grounded, and at length fell over on one side. The current rushing like a torrent strained the feeble bark to such a degree, that her seams yawned, and she appeared ready to go to pieces. In this moment of peril a hardy seamen threw himself into the water to carry the end of a rope on shore as a means of saving the crew. He was swept away by the furious current and perished in sight of his companions. Undismayed by his fate,

another brave seaman plunged into the waves and succeeded in reaching the shore. He then fastened one end of a rope firmly to a tree, and, the other being secured on board of the caravel, Nicuesa and his crew passed one by one along it, and reached the shore in safety.

Scarcely had they landed when the caravel went to pieces, and with it perished their provisions, clothing, and all other necessities. Nothing remained to them but the boat of the caravel, which was accidentally cast on shore. Here then they were, in helpless plight, on a remote and savage coast, without food, without arms, and almost naked. What had become of the rest of the squadron they knew not. Some feared that the brigantines had been wrecked; others called to mind that Lope de Olano had been one of the loose lawless men confederated with Francisco Roldan in his rebellion against Columbus, and, judging him from the school in which he had served, hinted their apprehensions that he had deserted with the brigantines. Nicuesa partook of their suspicions, and was anxious and sad at heart. He concealed his uneasiness, however, and endeavoured to cheer up his companions, proposing that they should proceed westward on foot in search of Veragua, the seat of his intended government, observing, that if the ships had survived the tempest, they would probably repair to that place. They accordingly set off along the sea shore, for the thickness of the forest prevented their traversing the interior. Four of the hardiest sailors put to sea in the boat, and kept abreast of them, to help them across the bays and rivers.

Their sufferings were extreme. Most of them were destitute of shoes, and many almost naked. They had to clamber over sharp and rugged rocks, and to struggle through dense forests beset with thorns and brambles. Often they had to wade across rank fens and morasses and drowned lands, or to traverse deep and rapid streams.

Their food consisted of herbs and roots and shellfish gathered along the shore. Had they even met with Indians they would have dreaded, in their unarmed state, to apply to them for provisions, lest they should take revenge for the outrages committed along this coast by other Europeans.

To render their sufferings more intolerable, they were in doubt whether, in the storms which preceded their shipwreck, they had not been driven past Veragua, in which case each step would take them so much the farther from their desired haven.

Still they laboured feebly forward, encouraged by the words and the example of Nicuesa, who cheerfully partook of the toils and hardships of the meanest of his men.

They had slept one night at the foot of impending rocks, and were about to resume their weary march in the morning, when they were espied by some Indians from a neighbouring height. Among the followers of Nicuesa was a favourite page, whose tattered finery and white hat caught the quick eyes of the savages. One of them immediately singled him out, and taking a deadly aim, let fly an arrow that laid him expiring at the feet of his master. While the generous cavalier mourned over his slaughtered page, consternation prevailed among his companions, each fearing for his own life. The Indians, however, did not follow up this casual act of hostility, but suffered the Spaniards to pursue their painful journey unmolested.

Arriving one day at the point of a great bay that ran far inland, they were conveyed, a few at a time, in the boat to what appeared to be the opposite point. Being all landed, and resuming their march, they found to their surprise that they were on an island, separated from the main land by a great arm of the sea. The sailors who managed the boat were too weary to take them to the opposite shore; they remained therefore all night upon the island.

In the morning they prepared to depart, but, to their consternation, the boat with the four mariners had disappeared. They ran anxiously from point to point, uttering shouts and cries, in hopes the boat might be in some inlet; they clambered the rocks and strained their eyes over the sea. It was all in vain. No boat was to be seen; no voice responded to their call; it was too evident the four mariners had either perished or had deserted them.

CHAPTER II.

NICUESA AND HIS MEN ON A DESOLATE ISLAND.

THE situation of Nicuesa and his men was dreary and desperate in the extreme. They were on a desolate island bordering upon a swampy coast, in a remote and lonely sea, where commerce never spread a sail. Their companions in the other ships, if still alive and true to them, had doubtless given them

up for lost; and many years might elapse before the casual bark of a discoverer might venture along these shores. Long before that time their fate would be sealed, and their bones bleaching on the sands would alone tell their story.

In this hopeless state many abandoned themselves to frantic grief, wandering about the island, wringing their hands and uttering groans and lamentations; others called upon God for succour, and many sat down in silent and sullen despair.

The cravings of hunger and thirst at length roused them to exertion. They found no food but a few shell-fish scattered along the shore, and coarse herbs and roots, some of them of an unwholesome quality. The island had neither springs nor streams of fresh water, and they were fain to slake their thirst at the brackish pools of the marshes.

Nicuesa endeavoured to animate his men with new hopes. He employed them in constructing a raft of drift-wood and branches of trees, for the purpose of crossing the arm of the sea that separated them from the main land. It was a difficult task, for they were destitute of tools, and when the raft was finished they had no oars with which to manage it. Some of the most expert swimmers undertook to propel it, but they were too much enfeebled by their sufferings. On their first essay the currents which sweep that coast bore the raft out to sea, and they swam back with difficulty to the island. Having no other chance of escape, and no other means of exercising and keeping up the spirits of his followers, Nicuesa repeatedly ordered new rafts to be constructed, but the result was always the same, and the men at length either grew too feeble to work or renounced the attempt in despair.

Thus, day after day and week after week elapsed without any mitigation of suffering or any prospect of relief. Every day some one or other sank under his miseries, a victim not so much to hunger and thirst as to grief and despondency. His death was envied by his wretched survivors, many of whom were reduced to such debility that they had to crawl on hands and knees in search of the herbs and shell-fish which formed their scanty food.

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL OF A BOAT—CONDUCT OF LOPE DE OLANO.

WHEN the unfortunate Spaniards, without hope of succour, began to consider death as a desirable end to their miseries, they were roused to new life one day by beholding a sail gleaming on the horizon. Their exultation was checked, however, by the reflection how many chances there were against its approaching this wild and desolate island. Watching it with anxious eyes they put up prayers to God to conduct it to their relief, and at length, to their great joy, they perceived that it was steering directly for the island. On a nearer approach it proved to be one of the brigantines that had been commanded by Lope de Olano. It came to anchor: a boat put off, and among the crew were the four sailors who had disappeared so mysteriously from the island.

These men accounted in a satisfactory manner for their desertion. They had been persuaded that the ships were in some harbour to the eastward, and that they were daily leaving them farther behind. Disheartened at the constant, and, in their opinion, fruitless toil which fell to their share in the struggle westward, they resolved to take their own counsel, without risking the opposition of Nicuesa. In the dead of the night, therefore, when their companions on the island were asleep, they had silently cast off their boat, and retraced their course along the coast. After several days' toil they found the brigantines under the command of Lope de Olano, in the river of Belen, the scene of the disasters of Columbus in his fourth voyage.

The conduct of Lope de Olano was regarded with suspicion by his contemporaries, and is still subject to doubt. He is supposed to have deserted Nicuesa designedly, intending to usurp the command of the expedition. Men, however, were prone to judge harshly of him from his having been concerned in the treason and rebellion of Francisco Roldan. On the stormy night when Nicuesa stood out to sea to avoid the dangers of the shore, Olano took shelter under the lee of an island. Seeing nothing of the caravel of his commander in the morning, he made no effort to seek for it, but proceeded with the brigantines to the river Chagres, where he found the ships at

anchor. They had landed all their cargo, being almost in a sinking condition from the ravages of the worms. Olano persuaded the crews that Nicuesa had perished in the late storm, and, being his lieutenant, he assumed the command. Whether he had been perfidious or not in his motives, his command was but a succession of disasters. He sailed from Chagres for the river of Belen, where the ships were found so damaged that they had to be broken to pieces. Most of the people constructed wretched cabins on the shore, where, during a sudden storm, they were almost washed away by the swelling of the river, or swallowed up in the shifting sands. Several of his men were drowned in an expedition in quest of gold, and he himself merely escaped by superior swimming. Their provisions were exhausted, they suffered from hunger and from various maladies, and many perished in extreme misery. All were clamorous to abandon the coast, and Olano set about constructing a caravel, out of the wreck of the ships, for the purpose, as he said, of returning to Hispaniola, though many suspected it was still his intention to persist in the enterprise. Such was the state in which the four seamen had found Olano and his party; most of them living in miserable cabins and destitute of the necessaries of life.

The tidings that Nicuesa was still alive put an end to the sway of Olano. Whether he had acted with truth or perfidy, he now manifested a zeal to relieve his commander, and immediately despatched a brigantine in quest of him, which, guided by the four seamen, arrived at the island in the way that has been mentioned.

CHAPTER IV.

NICUESA REJOINS HIS CREWS.

WHEN the crew of the brigantine and the companions of Nicuesa met, they embraced each other with tears, for the hearts, even of the rough mariners, were subdued by the sorrows they had undergone; and men are rendered kind to each other by a community of suffering. The brigantine had brought a quantity of palm nuts, and of such other articles of food as they had been able to procure along the coast. These the famished Spaniards devoured with such voracity that Nicuesa was obliged to interfere, lest they should injure them-

selves. Nor was the supply of fresh water less grateful to their parched and fevered palates.

When sufficiently revived, they all abandoned the desolate island, and set sail for the river Belen, exulting as joyfully as if their troubles were at an end, and they were bound to a haven of delight, instead of merely changing the scene of suffering and encountering a new variety of horrors.

In the mean time Lope de Olano had been diligently preparing for the approaching interview with his commander, by persuading his fellow officers to intercede in his behalf, and to place his late conduct in the most favourable light. He had need of their intercessions. Nicuesa arrived, burning with indignation. He ordered him to be instantly seized and punished as a traitor; attributing to his desertion the ruin of the enterprise and the sufferings and death of so many of his brave followers. The fellow captains of Olano spoke in his favour; but Nicuesa turned indignantly upon them: "You do well," cried he, "to supplicate mercy for him; you, who, yourselves, have need of pardon! You have participated in his crime; why else have you suffered so long a time to elapse without compelling him to send one of the vessels in search of me?"

The captains now vindicated themselves by assurances of their belief in his having foundered at sea. They reiterated their supplications for mercy to Olano; drawing the most affecting pictures of their past and present sufferings, and urging the impolicy of increasing the horrors of their situation by acts of severity. Nicuesa at length was prevailed upon to spare his victim; resolving to send him, by the first opportunity, a prisoner to Spain. It appeared, in truth, no time to add to the daily blows of fate that were thinning the number of his followers. Of the gallant armament of seven hundred resolute and effective men that had sailed with him from San Domingo, four hundred had already perished by various miseries; and of the survivors, many could scarcely be said to live.

CHAPTER V.

SUFFERINGS OF NICUESA AND HIS MEN ON THE COAST OF THE ISTHMUS.

THE first care of Nicuesa, on resuming the general command, was to take measures for the relief of his people, who were

perishing with famine and disease. All those who were in health, or who had strength sufficient to bear the least fatigue, were sent on foraging parties among the fields and villages of the natives. It was a service of extreme peril; for the Indians of this part of the coast were fierce and warlike, and were the same who had proved so formidable to Columbus and his brother when they attempted to found a settlement in this neighbourhood.

Many of the Spaniards were slain in these expeditions. Even if they succeeded in collecting provisions, the toil of bringing them to the harbour was worse to men in their enfeebled condition than the task of fighting for them; for they were obliged to transport them on their backs, and, thus heavily laden, to scramble over rugged rocks, through almost impervious forests, and across dismal swamps.

Harassed by these perils and fatigues, they broke forth into murmurs against their commander, accusing him, not merely of indifference to their sufferings, but of wantonly imposing severe and unnecessary tasks upon them out of revenge for their having neglected him.

The genial temper of Nicuesa had, in fact, been soured by disappointment; and a series of harassing cares and evils had rendered him irritable and impatient; but he was a cavalier of a generous and honourable nature, and does not appear to have enforced any services that were not indispensable to the common safety. In fact, the famine had increased to such a degree, that, we are told, thirty Spaniards, having on one occasion found the dead body of an Indian in a state of decay, they were driven by hunger to make a meal of it, and were so infected by the horrible repast, that not one of them survived.*

Disheartened by these miseries, Nicuesa determined to abandon a place which seemed destined to be the grave of Spaniards. Embarking the greater part of his men in the two brigantines and the caravel which had been built by Olano, he set sail eastward in search of some more favourable situation for his settlement. A number of the men remained behind to await the ripening of some maize and vegetables which they had sown. These he left under the command of Alonzo Nuñez, whom he nominated his *Alcalde Mayor*.

When Nicuesa had coasted about four leagues to the east, a Genoese sailor, who had been with Columbus in his last voy-

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* D. i. and viii. c. 2.

age, informed him that there was a fine harbour somewhere in that neighbourhood, which had pleased the old admiral so highly that he had given it the name of Puerto Bello. He added that they might know the harbour by an anchor, half buried in the sand, which Columbus had left there; near to which was a fountain of remarkably cool and sweet water springing up at the foot of a large tree. Nicuesa ordered search to be made along the coast, and at length they found the anchor, the fountain, and the tree. It was the same harbour which bears the name of Portobello at the present day. A number of the crew were sent on shore in search of provisions, but were assailed by the Indians; and, being too weak to wield their weapons with their usual prowess, were driven back to the vessels with the loss of several slain or wounded.

Dejected at these continual misfortunes, Nicuesa continued his voyage seven leagues farther, until he came to the harbour to which Columbus had given the name of Puerto de Bastimentos, or Port of Provisions. It presented an advantageous situation for a fortress, and was surrounded by a fruitful country. Nicuesa resolved to make it his abiding place. "Here," said he, "let us stop, *en el nombre de Dios!*" (in the name of God.) His followers, with the superstitious feeling with which men in adversity are prone to interpret every thing into omens, persuaded themselves that there was favourable augury in his words, and called the harbour "*Nombre de Dios*," which name it afterwards retained.

Nicuesa now landed, and, drawing his sword, took solemn possession in the name of the Catholic sovereigns. He immediately began to erect a fortress to protect his people against the attacks of the savages. As this was a case of exigency, he exacted the labour of every one capable of exertion. The Spaniards, thus equally distressed by famine and toil, forgot their favourable omen, cursed the place as fated to be their grave, and called down imprecations on the head of their commander, who compelled them to labour when ready to sink with hunger and debility. Those murmured no less who were sent in quest of food, which was only to be gained by fatigue and bloodshed; for, whatever they collected, they had to transport from great distances, and they were frequently waylaid and assaulted by the Indians.

When he could spare men for the purpose, Nicuesa despatched the caravel for those whom he had left at the river Belen. Many of them had perished, and the survivors had

been reduced to such famine at times as to eat all kinds of reptiles, until a part of an alligator was a banquet to them. On mustering all his forces when thus united, Nicuesa found that but one hundred emaciated and dejected wretches remained.

He despatched the caravel to Hispaniola, to bring a quantity of bacon which he had ordered to have prepared there, but it never returned. He ordered Gonzalo de Badajos, at the head of twenty men, to scour the country for provisions; but the Indians had ceased to cultivate; they could do with little food, and could subsist on the roots and wild fruits of the forest. The Spaniards, therefore, found deserted villages and barren fields, but lurking enemies at every defile. So deplorably were they reduced by their sufferings, that at length there were not left a sufficient number in health and strength to mount guard at night; and the fortress remained without sentinels. Such was the desperate situation of this once gay and gallant cavalier, and of his brilliant armament, which but a few months before had sallied from San Domingo, flushed with the consciousness of power and the assurance that they had the means of compelling the favours of fortune.

It is necessary to leave them for a while, and turn our attention to other events which will ultimately be found to bear upon their destinies.

CHAPTER VI.

EXPEDITION OF THE BACHELOR ENCISO IN SEARCH OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF OJEDA.—(1510.)

IN calling to mind the narrative of the last expedition of Alonzo de Ojeda, the reader will doubtless remember the Bachelor Martin Fernandez de Enciso, who was inspired by that adventurous cavalier with an ill-starred passion for colonizing, and freighted a vessel at San Domingo with reinforcements and supplies for the settlement at San Sebastian.

When the Bachelor was on the eve of sailing, a number of the loose hangers-on of the colony, and men encumbered with debt, concerted to join his ship from the coast and the out-ports. Their creditors, however, getting notice of their intention, kept a close watch upon every one that went on board

while in the harbour, and obtained an armed vessel from the Admiral Don Diego Columbus, to escort the enterprising Bachelor clear of the island. One man, however, contrived to elude these precautions, and as he afterwards rose to great importance, it is proper to notice him particularly. His name was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. He was a native of Xeres de los Caballeros, and of a noble though impoverished family. He had been brought up in the service of Don Puerto Carrero, Lord of Moguer, and he afterwards enlisted among the adventurers who accompanied Rodrigo de Bastides in his voyage of discovery. Peter Martyr, in his Latin decades, speaks of him by the appellation of "egregius digladiator," which has been interpreted by some as a skilful swordsman, by others as an adroit fencing master. He intimates, also, that he was a mere soldier of fortune, of loose prodigal habits, and the circumstances under which he is first introduced to us justify this character. He had fixed himself for a time in Hispaniola, and undertaken to cultivate a farm at the town of Salvatierra, on the sea coast, but in a little time had completely involved himself in debt. The expedition of Enciso presented him with an opportunity of escaping from his embarrassments, and of indulging his adventurous habits. To elude the vigilance of his creditors and of the armed escort, he concealed himself in a cask, which was conveyed from his farm on the sea coast on board of the vessel, as if containing provisions for the voyage. When the vessel was fairly out at sea, and abandoned by the escort, Vasco Nuñez emerged like an apparition from his cask, to the great surprise of Enciso, who had been totally ignorant of the stratagem. The Bachelor was indignant at being thus outwitted, even though he gained a recruit by the deception; and in the first ebullition of his wrath gave the fugitive debtor a very rough reception, threatening to put him on shore on the first uninhabited island they should encounter. Vasco Nuñez, however, succeeded in pacifying him, "for God," says the venerable Las Casas, "reserved him for greater things." It is probable the Bachelor beheld in him a man well fitted for his expedition, for Vasco Nuñez was in the prime and vigour of his days, tall and muscular, seasoned to hardships, and of intrepid spirit.

Arriving at the main land, they touched at the fatal harbour of Carthagena, the scene of the sanguinary conflicts of Ojeda and Nicuesa with the natives, and of the death of the brave Juan de la Cosa. Enciso was ignorant of those events, having had

no tidings from those adventurers since their departure from San Domingo; without any hesitation, therefore, he landed a number of his men to repair his boat, which was damaged, and to procure water. While the men were working upon the boat, a multitude of Indians gathered at a distance, well armed, and with menacing aspect, sounding their shells and brandishing their weapons. The experience they had had of the tremendous powers of the strangers, however, rendered them cautious of attacking, and for three days they hovered in this manner about the Spaniards, the latter being obliged to keep continually on the alert. At length two of the Spaniards ventured one day from the main body to fill a water cask from the adjacent river. Scarcely had they reached the margin of the stream, when eleven savages sprang from the thickets and surrounded them, bending their bows and pointing their arrows. In this way they stood for a moment or two in fearful suspense, the Indians refraining from discharging their shafts, but keeping them constantly pointed at their breasts. One of the Spaniards attempted to escape to his comrades, who were repairing the boat, but the other called him back, and understanding something of the Indian tongue, addressed a few amicable words to the savages. The latter, astonished at being spoken to in their own language, now relaxed a little from their fierceness, and demanded of the strangers who they were, who were their leaders, and what they sought upon their shores. The Spaniard replied that they were harmless people who came from other lands, and merely touched there through necessity, and he wondered that they should meet them with such hostility; he at the same time warned them to beware, as there would come many of his countrymen well armed, and would wreak terrible vengeance upon them for any mischief they might do. While they were thus parleying, the Bachelor Enciso, hearing that two of his men were surrounded by the savages, sallied instantly from his ship, and hastened with an armed force to their rescue. As he approached, however, the Spaniard who had held the parley made him a signal that the natives were pacific. In fact, the latter had supposed that this was a new invasion of Ojeda and Nicuesa, and had thus arrayed themselves, if not to take vengeance for past outrages, at least to defend their houses from a second desolation. When they were convinced, however, that these were a totally different band of strangers, and without hostile intentions, their animosity was at an end; they threw by their weapons

and came forward with the most confiding frankness. During the whole time that the Spaniards remained there, they treated them with the greatest friendship, supplying them with bread made from maize, with salted fish, and with the fermented and spirituous beverages common along that coast. Such was the magnanimous conduct of men who were considered among the most ferocious and warlike of these savage nations; and who but recently had beheld their shores invaded, their villages ravaged and burnt, and their friends and relations butchered, without regard to age or sex, by the countrymen of these very strangers. When we recall the bloody and indiscriminate vengeance wreaked upon this people by Ojeda and his followers for their justifiable resistance of invasion, and compare it with their placable and considerate spirit when an opportunity for revenge presented itself, we confess we feel a momentary doubt whether the arbitrary appellation of savage is always applied to the right party.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BACHELOR HEARS UNWELCOME TIDINGS OF HIS DESTINED JURISDICTION.

NOT long after the arrival of Enciso at this eventful harbour he was surprised by the circumstance of a brigantine entering and coming to anchor. To encounter an European sail in these almost unknown seas, was always a singular and striking occurrence, but the astonishment of the Bachelor was mingled with alarm when, on boarding the brigantine, he found that it was manned by a number of the men who had embarked with Ojeda. His first idea was, that they had mutinied against their commander, and deserted with the vessel. The feelings of the magistrate were aroused within him by the suspicion, and he determined to take his first step as Alcalde Mayor, by seizing them and inflicting on them the severity of the law. He altered his tone, however, on conversing with their resolute commander. This was no other than Francisco Pizarro, whom Ojeda had left as his *locum tenens* at San Sebastian, and who showed the Bachelor his letter patent, signed by that unfortunate governor. In fact, the little brigantine contained the sad remnant of the once vaunted colony. After the de-

parture of Ojeda in the pirate ship, his followers, whom he had left behind under the command of Pizarro, continued in the fortress until the stipulated term of fifty days had expired. Receiving no succour, and hearing no tidings of Ojeda, they then determined to embark and sail for Hispaniola; but here an unthought-of difficulty presented itself: they were seventy in number, and the two brigantines which had been left with them were incapable of taking so many. They came to the forlorn agreement, therefore, to remain until famine, sickness, and the poisoned arrows of the Indians should reduce their number to the capacity of the brigantines. A brief space of time was sufficient for the purpose. They then prepared for the voyage. Four mares, which had been kept alive as terrors to the Indians, were killed and salted for sea-stores. Then taking whatever other articles of provision remained, they embarked and made sail. One brigantine was commanded by Pizarro, the other by one Valenzuela.

They had not proceeded far when, in a storm, a sea struck the crazy vessel of Valenzuela with such violence as to cause it to founder with all its crew. The other brigantine was so near that the mariners witnessed the struggles of their drowning companions and heard their cries. Some of the sailors, with the common disposition to the marvellous, declared that they had beheld a great whale, or some other monster of the deep, strike the vessel with its tail, and either stave in its sides or shatter the rudder, so as to cause the shipwreck.* The surviving brigantine then made the best of its way to the harbour of Carthagena, to seek provisions.

Such was the disastrous account rendered to the Bachelor by Pizarro, of his destined jurisdiction. Enciso, however, was of a confident mind and sanguine temperament, and trusted to restore all things to order and prosperity on his arrival.

CHAPTER VIII.

CRUSADE OF THE BACHELOR ENCISO AGAINST THE SEPULCHRES OF ZENU.

THE Bachelor Enciso, as has been shown, was a man of the sword as well as of the robe; having doubtless imbibed a pas-

* Herrera, Hist. Ind. d. i. l. vii. c. 10.

sion for military exploit from his intimacy with the discoverers. Accordingly, while at Carthagena, he was visited by an impulse of the kind, and undertook an enterprise that would have been worthy of his friend Ojeda. He had been told by the Indians that about twenty-five leagues to the west lay a province called Zenu, the mountains of which abounded with the finest gold. This was washed down by torrents during the rainy season, in such quantities that the natives stretched nets across the rivers to catch the largest particles; some of which were said to be as large as eggs.

The idea of taking gold in nets captivated the imagination of the Bachelor, and his cupidity was still more excited by further accounts of this wealthy province. He was told that Zenu was the general place of sepulture of the Indian tribes throughout the country, whither they brought their dead, and buried them, according to their custom, decorated with their most precious ornaments.

It appeared to him a matter of course, therefore, that there must be an immense accumulation of riches in the Indian tombs, from the golden ornaments that had been buried with the dead through a long series of generations. Fired with the thought, he determined to make a foray into this province, and to sack the sepulchres! Neither did he feel any compunction at the idea of plundering the dead, considering the deceased as pagans and infidels, who had forfeited even the sanctuary of the grave, by having been buried according to the rites and ceremonies of their idolatrous religion.

Enciso, accordingly, made sail from Carthagena and landed with his forces on the coast of Zenu. Here he was promptly opposed by two caciques, at the head of a large band of warriors. The Bachelor, though he had thus put on the soldier, retained sufficient of the spirit of his former calling not to enter into quarrel without taking care to have the law on his side; he proceeded regularly, therefore, according to the legal form recently enjoined by the crown. He caused to be read and interpreted to the caciques the same formula used by Ojeda, expounding the nature of the Deity, the supremacy of the pope, and the right of the Catholic sovereigns to all these lands, by virtue of a grant from his holiness. The caciques listened to the whole very attentively and without interruption, according to the laws of Indian courtesy. They then replied that, as to the assertion that there was but one God, the sovereign of heaven and earth, it seemed to them good, and that such must

be the case; but as to the doctrine that the pope was regent of the world in place of God, and that he had made a grant of their country to the Spanish king, they observed that the pope must have been drunk to give away what was not his, and the king must have been somewhat mad to ask at his hands what belonged to others. They added, that they were lords of those lands and needed no other sovereign, and if this king should come to take possession, they would cut off his head and put it on a pole; that being their mode of dealing with their enemies. —As an illustration of this custom they pointed out to Enciso the very uncomfortable spectacle of a row of grizzly heads impaled in the neighbourhood.

Nothing daunted either by the reply or the illustration, the Bachelor menaced them with war and slavery as the consequences of their refusal to believe and submit. They replied by threatening to put his head upon a pole as a representative of his sovereign. The Bachelor, having furnished them with the law, now proceeded to the commentary. He attacked the Indians, routed them, and took one of the caciques prisoner, but in the skirmish two of his men were slightly wounded with poisoned arrows, and died raving with torment.*

It does not appear, however, that his crusade against the sepulchres was attended with any lucrative advantage. Perhaps the experience he had received of the hostility of the natives, and of the fatal effects of their poisoned arrows, prevented his penetrating into the land with his scanty force. Certain it is, the reputed wealth of Zenu, and the tale of its fishery for gold with nets, remained unascertained and uncontradicted, and were the cause of subsequent and disastrous enterprises. The Bachelor contented himself with his victory, and returning to his ships, prepared to continue his voyage for the seat of government established by Ojeda in the Gulf of Uraba.

* The above anecdote is related by the Bachelor Enciso himself, in a geographical work entitled *Suma de Geographia*, which he published in Seville, in 1519. As the reply of the poor savages contains something of natural logic we give a part of it as reported by the Bachelor. "Respondieron me: que en lo que dezia que no avia sino un dios y que este gobernaba el cielo y la tierra y que era señor de todo que les parecia y que asi debia ser: pero que en lo que dezia que el papa era señor de todo el universo en lugar de dios y que el avia fecho merced de aquella tierra al rey de Castilla; dixeron que el papa debiera estar boracho quando lo hizo pues daba lo que no era suyo, y que el rey que pedia y tomava la merced debia ser algun loco pues pedia lo que era de otros," etc.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BACHELOR ARRIVES AT SAN SEBASTIAN—HIS DISASTERS THERE, AND SUBSEQUENT EXPLOITS AT DARIEN.

IT was not without extreme difficulty, and the peremptory exercise of his authority as *Alcalde Mayor*, that Enciso prevailed upon the crew of Pizarro to return with him to the fated shores of San Sebastian. He at length arrived in sight of the long-wished-for seat of his anticipated power and authority; but here he was doomed like his principal, Ojeda, to meet with nothing but misfortune. On entering the harbour his vessel struck on a rock on the eastern point. The rapid currents and tumultuous waves rent it to pieces; the crew escaped with great difficulty to the brigantine of Pizarro; a little flour, cheese, and biscuit, and a small part of the arms were saved, but the horses, mares, swine, and all other colonial supplies were swept away, and the unfortunate Bachelor beheld the proceeds of several years of prosperous litigation swallowed up in an instant.

His dream of place and dignity seemed equally on the point of vanishing, for, on landing, he found the fortress and its adjacent houses mere heaps of ruins, having been destroyed with fire by the Indians.

For a few days the Spaniards maintained themselves with palm nuts, and with the flesh of a kind of wild swine, of which they met with several herds. These supplies failing, the Bachelor sallied forth with a hundred men to forage the country. They were waylaid by three Indians, who discharged all the arrows in their quivers with incredible rapidity, wounded several Spaniards, and then fled with a swiftness that defied pursuit. The Spaniards returned to the harbour in dismay. All their dread of the lurking savages and their poisoned weapons revived, and they insisted upon abandoning a place marked out for disaster.

The Bachelor Enciso was himself disheartened at the situation of this boasted capital of San Sebastian;—but whither could he go where the same misfortunes might not attend him? In this moment of doubt and despondency, Vasco Nuñez, the same absconding debtor who had been smuggled on board in the cask, stepped forward to give counsel. He informed the

Bachelor that several years previously he had sailed along that coast with Rodrigo de Bastides. They had explored the whole gulf of Uraba; and he well remembered an Indian village situated on the western side, on the banks of a river which the natives called Darien. The country around was fertile and abundant, and was said to possess mines of gold; and the natives, though a warlike race, never made use of poisoned weapons. He offered to guide the Bachelor to this place, where they might get a supply of provisions, and even found their colony.

The Spaniards hailed the words of Vasco Nuñez as if revealing a land of promise. The Bachelor adopted his advice, and, guided by him, set sail for the village, determined to eject the inhabitants and take possession of it as the seat of government. Arrived at the river, he landed, put his men in martial array, and marched along the banks. The place was governed by a brave cacique named Zemaco. When he heard of the approach of the Spaniards, he sent off the women and children to a place of safety, and posting himself with five hundred of his warriors on a height, prepared to give the intruders a warm reception. The Bachelor was a discoverer at all points, pious, daring, and rapacious. On beholding this martial array he recommended himself and his followers to God, making a vow in their name to "Our Lady of Antigua," whose image is adored with great devotion in Seville, that the first church and town which they built should be dedicated to her, and that they would make a pilgrimage to Seville to offer the spoils of the heathen at her shrine. Having thus endeavoured to propitiate the favour of Heaven, and to retain the Holy Virgin in his cause, he next proceeded to secure the fidelity of his followers. Doubting that they might have some lurking dread of poisoned arrows, he exacted from them all an oath that they would not turn their backs upon the foe, whatever might happen. Never did warrior enter into battle with more preliminary forms and covenants than the Bachelor Enciso. All these points being arranged, he assumed the soldier, and attacked the enemy with such valour, that though they made at first a show of fierce resistance, they were soon put to flight, and many of them slain. The Bachelor entered the village in triumph, took possession of it by unquestionable right of conquest, and plundered all the hamlets and houses of the surrounding country; collecting great quantities of food and cotton, with bracelets, anklets, plates, and other ornaments of gold, to the value of ten thou-

sand castellanos.* His heart was wonderfully elated by his victory and his booty; his followers, also, after so many hardships and disasters, gave themselves up to joy at this turn of good fortune, and it was unanimously agreed that the seat of government should be established in this village; to which, in fulfilment of his vow, Enciso gave the name of Santa Maria de la Antigua del Darien.

CHAPTER X.

THE BACHELOR ENCISO UNDERTAKES THE COMMAND—HIS DOWNFALL.

THE Bachelor Enciso now entered upon the exercise of his civil functions as Alcalde Mayor, and Lieutenant of the absent governor, Ojeda. His first edict was stern and peremptory; he forbade all trafficking with the natives for gold, on private account, under pain of death. This was in conformity to royal command; but it was little palatable to men who had engaged in the enterprise in the hopes of enjoying free trade, lawless liberty, and golden gains. They murmured among themselves, and insinuated that Enciso intended to reserve all the profit to himself.

Vasco Nuñez was the first to take advantage of the general discontent. He had risen to consequence among his fellow-adventurers, from having guided them to this place, and from his own intrinsic qualities, being hardy, bold, and intelligent, and possessing the random spirit and open-handed generosity common to a soldier of fortune, and calculated to dazzle and delight the multitude.

He bore no good will to the Bachelor, recollecting his threat of landing him on an uninhabited island, when he escaped in a cask from San Domingo. He sought, therefore, to make a party against him, and to unseat him from his command. He attacked him in his own way, with legal weapons, questioning the legitimacy of his pretensions. The boundary line, he observed, which separated the jurisdictions of Ojeda and Nicuesa, ran through the centre of the gulf of Uraba. The village of Darien lay on the western side, which had been allotted to

* Equivalent to a present sum of 53,259 dollars.

Nicuesa. Enciso, therefore, as Alcalde Mayor and Lieutenant of Ojeda, could have no jurisdiction here, and his assumed authority was a sheer usurpation.

The Spaniards, already incensed at the fiscal regulations of Enciso, were easily convinced; so with one accord they refused allegiance to him; and the unfortunate Bachelor found the chair of authority to which he had so fondly and anxiously aspired, suddenly wrested from under him, before he had well time to take his seat.

CHAPTER XI.

PERPLEXITIES AT THE COLONY—ARRIVAL OF COLMENARES.

To depose the Bachelor had been an easy matter, for most men are ready to assist in pulling down: but to choose a successor was a task of far more difficulty. The people at first agreed to elect mere civil magistrates, and accordingly appointed Vasco Nuñez and one Zamudio as alcaldes, together with a cavalier of some merit of the name of Valdivia, as regidor. They soon, however, became dissatisfied with this arrangement, and it was generally considered advisable to vest the authority in one person. Who this person should be, was now the question. Some proposed Nicuesa, as they were within his province; others were strenuous for Vasco Nuñez. A violent dispute ensued, which was carried on with such heat and obstinacy, that many, anxious for a quiet life, declared it would be better to reinstate Enciso until the pleasure of the king should be known.

In the height of these factious altercations the Spaniards were aroused one day by the thundering of cannon from the opposite side of the gulf, and beheld columns of smoke rising from the hills. Astonished at these signals of civilized man on these wild shores, they replied in the same manner, and in a short time two ships were seen standing across the gulf. They proved to be an armament commanded by one Rodrigo de Colmenares, and were in search of Nicuesa with supplies. They had met with the usual luck of adventurers on this disastrous coast, storms at sea and savage foes on shore, and many of their number had fallen by poisoned arrows. Colmenares had touched at San Sebastian to learn tidings of

Nicuesa; but, finding the fortress in ruins, had made signals, in hopes of being heard by the Spaniards, should they be yet lingering in the neighbourhood.

The arrival of Colmenares caused a temporary suspension of the feuds of the colonists. He distributed provisions among them and gained their hearts. Then, representing the legitimate right of Nicuesa to the command of all that part of the coast as a governor appointed by the king, he persuaded the greater part of the people to acknowledge his authority. It was generally agreed, therefore, that he should cruise along the coast in search of Nicuesa, and that Diego de Albitez, and an active member of the law, called the Bachelor Corral, should accompany him as ambassadors, to invite that cavalier to come and assume the government of Darien.

CHAPTER XII.

COLMENARES GOES IN QUEST OF NICUESA.

RODRIGO DE COLMENARES proceeded along the coast to the westward, looking into every bay and harbour, but for a long time without success. At length one day he discovered a brigantine at a small island in the sea. On making up to it, he found that it was part of the armament of Nicuesa, and had been sent out by him to forage for provisions. By this vessel he was piloted to the port of Nombre de Dios, the nominal capital of the unfortunate governor, but which was so surrounded and overshadowed by forests, that he might have passed by without noticing it.

The arrival of Colmenares was welcomed with transports and tears of joy. It was scarcely possible for him to recognize the once buoyant and brilliant Nicuesa in the squalid and dejected man before him. He was living in the most abject misery. Of all his once gallant and powerful band of followers, but sixty men remained, and those so feeble, yellow, emaciated, and woe-begone, that it was piteous to behold them.*

* The harbour of Nombre de Dios continued for a long time to present traces of the sufferings of the Spaniards. We are told by Herrera, that several years after the time here mentioned, a band of eighty Spanish soldiers, commanded by Gonzalo de Badajos, arrived at the harbour with an intention of penetrating into the interior. They found there the ruined fort of Nicuesa, together with skulls and

Colmenares distributed food among them, and told them that he had come to convey them to a plenteous country, and one rich in gold. When Nicuesa heard of the settlement at Darien, and that the inhabitants had sent for him to come and govern them, he was as a man suddenly revived from death. All the spirit and munificence of the cavalier again awakened in him. He gave a kind of banquet that very day to Colmenares and the ambassadors, from the provisions brought in the ship. He presided at his table with his former hilarity, and displayed a feat of his ancient office as royal carver, by holding up a fowl in the air and dissecting it with wonderful adroitness.

Well would it have been for Nicuesa had the sudden buoyancy of his feelings carried him no further, but adversity had not taught him prudence. In conversing with the envoys about the colony of Darien, he already assumed the tone of governor, and began to disclose the kind of policy with which he intended to rule. When he heard that great quantities of gold had been collected and retained by private individuals, his ire was kindled. He vowed to make them refund it, and even talked of punishing them for trespassing upon the privileges and monopolies of the crown. This was the very error that had unseated the Bachelor Enciso from his government, and it was a strong measure for one to threaten who as yet was governor but in expectation. The menace was not lost upon the watchful ambassadors Diego de Albitez and the Bachelor Corral. They were put still more on the alert by a conversation which they held that very evening with Lope de Olano, who was still detained a prisoner for his desertion, but who found means to commune with the envoys, and to prejudice them against his unsuspecting commander. "Take warning," said he, "by my treatment. I sent relief to Nicuesa and rescued him from death when starving on a desert island. Behold my recompense. He repays me with imprisonment and chains. Such is the gratitude the people of Darien may look for at his hands!"

The subtle Bachelor Corral and his fellow envoy laid these matters to heart, and took their measures accordingly. They

bones, and crosses erected on heaps of stones, dismal mementos of his followers who had perished of hunger; the sight of which struck such horror and dismay into the hearts of the soldiers that they would have abandoned their enterprise, had not their intrepid captain immediately sent away the ships, and thus deprived them of the means of retreating.—*Herrera*, d. xi. l. i.

hurried their departure before Nicuesa, and setting all sail on their caravel, hastened back to Darien. The moment they arrived they summoned a meeting of the principal inhabitants. "A blessed change we have made," said they, "in summoning this Diego de Nicuesa to the command! We have called in the stork to take the rule, who will not rest satisfied until he has devoured us." They then related, with the usual exaggeration, the unguarded threats that had fallen from Nicuesa, and instanced his treatment of Olano as a proof of a tyrannous and ungrateful disposition.

The words of the subtle Bachelor Corral and his associate produced a violent agitation among the people, especially among those who had amassed treasures which would have to be refunded. Nicuesa, too, by a transaction which almost destroys sympathy in his favour, gave time for their passions to ferment. On his way to Darien he stopped for several days among a group of small islands, for the purpose of capturing Indians to be sold as slaves. While committing these outrages against humanity, he sent forward Juan de Cayzedo in a boat to announce his coming. His messenger had a private pique against him, and played him false. He assured the people of Darien that all they had been told by their envoys concerning the tyranny and ingratitude of Nicuesa was true. That he treated his followers with wanton severity; that he took from them all they won in battle, saying, that the spoils were his rightful property; and that it was his intention to treat the people of Darien in the same manner. "What folly is it in you," added he, "being your own masters, and in such free condition, to send for a tyrant to rule over you!"

The people of Darien were convinced by this concurring testimony, and confounded by the overwhelming evil they had thus invoked upon their heads. They had deposed Enciso for his severity, and they had thrown themselves into the power of one who threatened to be ten times more severe! Vasco Nuñez de Balboa observed their perplexity and consternation. He drew them one by one apart, and conversed with them in private. "You are cast down in heart," said he, "and so you might well be, were the evil beyond all cure. But do not despair; there is an effectual relief, and you hold it in your hands. If you have committed an error in inviting Nicuesa to Darien, it is easily remedied by not receiving him when he comes!" The obviousness and simplicity of the remedy struck every mind, and it was unanimously adopted.

CHAPTER XIII.

CATASTROPHE OF THE UNFORTUNATE NICUESA.

WHILE this hostile plot was maturing at Darien, the unsuspecting Nicuesa pursued his voyage leisurely and serenely, and arrived in safety at the mouth of the river. On approaching the shore he beheld a multitude, headed by Vasco Nuñez, waiting, as he supposed to receive him with all due honour. He was about to land, when the public procurator, or attorney, called to him with a loud voice, warning him not to disembark, but advising him to return with all speed to his government at Nombre de Dios.

Nicuesa remained for a moment as if thunder-struck by so unlooked-for a salutation. When he recovered his self-possession he reminded them that he had come at their own request; he entreated, therefore, that he might be allowed to land and have an explanation, after which he would be ready to act as they thought proper. His entreaties were vain: they only provoked insolent replies, and threats of violence should he venture to put foot on shore. Night coming on, therefore, he was obliged to stand out to sea, but returned the next morning, hoping to find this capricious people in a different mood.

There did, indeed, appear to be a favourable change, for he was now invited to land. It was a mere stratagem to get him in their power, for no sooner did he set foot on shore than the multitude rushed forward to seize him. Among his many bodily endowments, Nicuesa was noted for swiftness of foot. He now trusted to it for safety, and, throwing off the dignity of governor, fled for his life along the shore, pursued by the rabble. He soon distanced his pursuers and took refuge in the woods.

Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, who was himself a man of birth, seeing this high-bred cavalier reduced to such extremity, and at the mercy of a violent rabble, repented of what he had done. He had not anticipated such popular fury, and endeavoured, though too late, to allay the tempest he had raised. He succeeded in preventing the people from pursuing Nicuesa into the forest, and then endeavoured to mollify the vindictive rage of his fellow Alcalde, Zamudio, whose hostility was quickened by the dread of losing his office, should the new governor be received; and who was supported in his boisterous conduct by

the natural love of the multitude for what are called "strong measures." Nicuesa now held a parley with the populace, through the mediation of Vasco Nuñez. He begged that, if they would not acknowledge him as governor, they would at least admit him as a companion. This they refused, saying, that if they admitted him in one capacity, he would end by attaining to the other. He then implored, that if he could be admitted on no other terms, they would treat him as a prisoner, and put him in irons, for he would rather die among them than return to *Nombre de Dios*, to perish of famine, or by the arrows of the Indians.

It was in vain that Vasco Nuñez exerted his eloquence to obtain some grace for this unhappy cavalier. His voice was drowned by the vociferations of the multitude. Among these was a noisy swaggering fellow named Francisco Benitez, a great talker and jester, who took a vulgar triumph in the distresses of a cavalier, and answered every plea in his behalf with scoffs and jeers. He was an adherent of the *Alcalde Zamudio*, and under his patronage felt emboldened to bluster. His voice was even uppermost in the general clamour, until, to the expostulations of Vasco Nuñez, he replied by merely bawling with great vociferation, "No, no, no!—we will receive no such a fellow among us as Nicuesa!" The patience of Vasco Nuñez was exhausted; he availed himself of his authority as *Alcade*, and suddenly, before his fellow magistrate could interfere, ordered the brawling ruffian to be rewarded with a hundred lashes, which were taled out roundly to him upon the shoulders.*

Seeing that the fury of the populace was not to be pacified, he sent word to Nicuesa to retire to his brigantine, and not to venture on shore until advised by him to do so. The counsel was fruitless. Nicuesa, above deceit himself, suspected it not in others. He retired to his brigantine, it is true, but suffered himself to be inveigled on shore by a deputation professing to come on the part of the public, with offers to reinstate him as governor. He had scarcely landed when he was set upon by an armed band, headed by the base-minded *Zamudio*, who seized him and compelled him, by menaces of death, to swear that he would immediately depart, and make no delay in any place until he had presented himself before the king and council in Castile.

It was in vain that Nicuesa reminded them that he was governor of that territory and representative of the king, and that they were guilty of treason in thus opposing him; it was in vain that he appealed to their humanity, or protested before God against their cruelty and persecution. The people were in that state of tumult when they are apt to add cruelty to injustice. Not content with expelling the discarded governor from their shores, they allotted him the worst vessel in the harbour; an old crazy brigantine totally unfit to encounter the perils and labours of the sea.

Seventeen followers embarked with him; some being of his household and attached to his person; the rest were volunteers who accompanied him out of respect and sympathy. The frail bark set sail on the first of March, 1511, and steered across the Caribbean sea for the island of Hispaniola, but was never seen or heard of more!

Various attempts have been made to penetrate the mystery that covers the fate of the brigantine and its crew. A rumour prevailed some years afterwards that several Spaniards, wandering along the shore of Cuba, found the following inscription carved on a tree:

Aquí feneciò el desdichado Nicuesa.

(Here perished the unfortunate Nicuesa.)

Hence it was inferred that he and his followers had landed there, and been massacred by the Indians. Las Casas, however, discredits this story. He accompanied the first Spaniards who took possession of Cuba, and heard nothing of the fact, as he most probably would have done had it really occurred. He imagines, rather, that the crazy bark was swallowed up by the storms and currents of the Caribbean sea, or that the crew perished with hunger and thirst, having been but scantily supplied with provisions. The good old bishop adds, with the superstitious feeling prevalent in that age, that a short time before Nicuesa sailed from Spain on his expedition, an astrologer warned him not to depart on the day he had appointed, or under a certain sign; the cavalier replied, however, that he had less confidence in the stars than in God who made them. "I recollect, moreover," adds Las Casas, "that about this time a comet was seen over this island of Hispaniola, which, if I do not forget, was in the shape of a sword; and it was said that a monk warned several of those about to embark

with Nicuesa, to avoid that captain, for the heavens foretold he was destined to be lost. The same, however," he concludes, "might be said of Alonzo de Ojeda, who sailed at the same time, yet returned to San Domingo and died in his bed." *

* Las Casas, *ut sup.* c. 68.

VASCO NUÑEZ DE BALBOA,

DISCOVERER OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

CHAPTER I.

FACTIONS AT DARIEN—VASCO NUÑEZ ELECTED TO THE COMMAND.

WE have traced the disastrous fortunes of Alonzo de Ojeda and Diego de Nicuesa; we have now to record the story of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, an adventurer equally daring, far more renowned, and not less unfortunate, who, in a manner, rose upon their ruins.

When the bark disappeared from view which bore the ill-starred Nicuesa from the shores of Darien, the community relapsed into factions, as to who should have the rule. The Bachelor Enciso insisted upon his claims as paramount, but he met with a powerful opponent in Vasco Nuñez, who had become a great favourite with the people, from his frank and fearless character, and his winning affability. In fact, he was peculiarly calculated to manage the fiery and factious, yet generous and susceptible nature of his countrymen; for the Spaniards, though proud and resentful, and impatient of indignity or restraint, are easily dazzled by valour, and won by courtesy and kindness. Vasco Nuñez had the external requisites also to captivate the multitude. He was now about thirty-five years of age; tall, well formed, and vigorous, with reddish hair, and an open prepossessing countenance. His office of Alcalde, while it clothed him with influence and importance, tempered those irregular and dissolute habits he might have indulged while a mere soldier of fortune; and his superior talent soon gave him a complete ascendancy over his official colleague Zamudio. He was thus enabled to set on foot a vigorous opposition to Enciso. Still he proceeded according to the forms of law, and summoned the Bachelor to trial, on

the charge of usurping the powers of Alcalde Mayor, on the mere appointment of Alonzo de Ojeda, whose jurisdiction did not extend to this province.

Enciso was an able lawyer, and pleaded his cause skilfully; but his claims were, in fact, fallacious, and, had they not been so, he had to deal with men who cared little for law, who had been irritated by his legal exactions, and who were disposed to be governed by a man of the sword rather than of the robe. He was readily found guilty, therefore, and thrown into prison, and all his property was confiscated. This was a violent verdict, and rashly executed; but justice seemed to grow fierce and wild when transplanted to the wilderness of the new world. Still there is no place where wrong can be committed with impunity; the oppression of the Bachelor Enciso, though exercised under the forms of law, and in a region remote from the pale of civilized life, redounded to the eventual injury of Vasco Nuñez, and contributed to blast the fruits of that ambition it was intended to promote.

The fortunes of the enterprising Bachelor had indeed run strangely counter to the prospects with which he had embarked at San Domingo; he had become a culprit at the bar instead of a judge upon the bench; and now was left to ruminate in a prison on the failure of his late attempt at general command. His friends, however, interceded warmly in his behalf, and at length obtained his release from confinement, and permission for him to return to Spain. Vasco Nuñez foresaw that the lawyer would be apt to plead his cause more effectually at the court of Castile than he had done before the partial and prejudiced tribunal of Darien. He prevailed upon his fellow Alcalde Zamudio, therefore, who was implicated with him in the late transactions, to return to Spain in the same vessel with the Bachelor, so as to be on the spot to answer his charges, and to give a favourable report of the case. He was also instructed to set forth the services of Vasco Nuñez, both in guiding the colonists to this place, and in managing the affairs of the settlement; and to dwell with emphasis on the symptoms of great riches in the surrounding country.

The Bachelor and the Alcalde embarked in a small caravel; and, as it was to touch at Hispaniola, Vasco Nuñez sent his confidential friend, the Regidor Valdivia, to that island to obtain provisions and recruits. He secretly put into his hands a round sum of gold as a present to Miguel de Pasamonte, the royal treasurer of Hispaniola, whom he knew to have great

credit with the king, and to be invested with extensive powers, craving at the same time his protection in the new world and his influence at court.

Having taken these shrewd precautions, Vasco Nuñez saw the caravel depart without dismay, though bearing to Spain his most dangerous enemy; he consoled himself, moreover, with the reflection that it likewise bore off his fellow Alcalde, Zamudio, and thus left him in sole command of the colony.

CHAPTER II.

EXPEDITION TO COYBA—VASCO NUÑEZ RECEIVES THE DAUGHTER OF A CACIQUE AS HOSTAGE.

VASCO NUÑEZ now exerted himself to prove his capacity for the government to which he had aspired; and as he knew that no proof was more convincing to King Ferdinand than ample remittances, and that gold covered all sins in the new world, his first object was to discover those parts of the country which most abounded in the precious metals. Hearing exaggerated reports of the riches of a province about thirty leagues distant, called Coyba, he sent Francisco Pizarro with six men to explore it.

The cacique Zemaco, the native lord of Darien, who cherished a bitter hostility against the European intruders, and hovered with his warriors about the settlement, received notice of this detachment, from his spies, and planted himself in ambush to waylay and destroy it. The Spaniards had scarcely proceeded three leagues along the course of the river when a host of savages burst upon them from the surrounding thickets, uttering frightful yells, and discharging showers of stones and arrows. Pizarro and his men, though sorely bruised and wounded, rushed into the thickest of the foe, slew many, wounded more, and put the rest to flight; but, fearing another assault, they made a precipitate retreat, leaving one of their companions, Francisco Hernan, disabled on the field. They arrived at the settlement crippled and bleeding; but when Vasco Nuñez heard the particulars of the action, his anger was roused against Pizarro, and he ordered him, though wounded, to return immediately and recover the disabled

man. "Let it not be said, for shame," said he, "that Spaniards fled before savages, and left a comrade in their hands!" Pizarro felt the rebuke, returned to the scene of combat and brought off Francisco Hernan in safety.

Nothing having been heard of Nicuesa since his departure, Vasco Nuñez despatched two brigantines for those followers of that unfortunate adventurer who had remained at Nombre de Dios. They were overjoyed at being rescued from their forlorn situation, and conveyed to a settlement where there was some prospect of comfortable subsistence. The brigantines, in coasting the shores of the Isthmus, picked up two Spaniards, clad in painted skins and looking as wild as the native Indians. These men, to escape some punishment, had fled from the ship of Nicuesa about a year and a half before, and had taken refuge with Careta, the cacique of Coyba. The savage chieftain had treated them with hospitable kindness; their first return for which, now that they found themselves safe among their countrymen, was to advise the latter to invade the cacique in his dwelling, where they assured them they would find immense booty. Finding their suggestion listened to, one of them proceeded to Darien, to serve as a guide to any expedition that might be set on foot; the other returned to the cacique, to assist in betraying him.

Vasco Nuñez was elated by the intelligence received through these vagabonds of the wilderness. He chose a hundred and thirty well armed and resolute men, and set off for Coyba, the dominions of Careta. The cacique received the Spaniards in his mansion with the accustomed hospitality of a savage, setting before them meat and drink, and whatever his house afforded; but when Vasco Nuñez asked for a large supply of provisions for the colony, he declared that he had none to spare, his people having been prevented from cultivating the soil by a war which he was waging with the neighbouring cacique of Ponca. The Spanish traitor, who had remained to betray his benefactor, now took Vasco Nuñez aside, and assured him that the cacique had an abundant hoard of provisions in secret; he advised him, however, to seem to believe his words, and to make a pretended departure for Darien with his troops, but to return in the night and take the village by surprise. Vasco Nuñez adopted the advice of the traitor. He took a cordial leave of Careta, and set off for the settlement. In the dead of the night, however, when the savages were buried in deep sleep, Vasco Nuñez led his men into the midst of the village, and,

before the inhabitants could rouse themselves to resistance, made captives of Careta, his wives, and children, and many of his people. He discovered also the hoard of provisions, with which he loaded two brigantines, and returned with his booty and his captives to Darien.

When the unfortunate cacique beheld his family in chains, and in the hands of strangers, his heart was wrung with despair; "What have I done to thee," said he to Vasco Nuñez, "that thou shouldst treat me thus cruelly? None of thy people ever came to my land that were not fed and sheltered and treated with loving-kindness. When thou camest to my dwelling, did I meet thee with a javelin in my hand? Did I not set meat and drink before thee and welcome thee as a brother? Set me free, therefore, with my family and people, and we will remain thy friends. We will supply thee with provisions, and reveal to thee the riches of the land. Dost thou doubt my faith? Behold my daughter, I give her to thee as a pledge of friendship. Take her for thy wife, and be assured of the fidelity of her family and her people!"

Vasco Nuñez felt the force of these words and knew the importance of forming a strong alliance among the natives. The captive maid, also, as she stood trembling and dejected before him, found great favour in his eyes, for she was young and beautiful. He granted, therefore, the prayer of the cacique, and accepted his daughter, engaging, moreover, to aid the father against his enemies, on condition of his furnishing provisions to the colony.

Careta remained three days at Darien, during which time he was treated with the utmost kindness. Vasco Nuñez took him on board of his ships and showed him every part of them. He displayed before him also the war-horses, with their armour and rich caparisons, and astonished him with the thunder of artillery. Lest he should be too much daunted by these war-like spectacles, he caused the musicians to perform a harmonious concert on their instruments, at which the cacique was lost in admiration. Thus having impressed him with a wonderful idea of the power and endowments of his new allies, he loaded him with presents and permitted him to depart.*

Careta returned joyfully to his territories, and his daughter remained with Vasco Nuñez, willingly, for his sake, giving up her family and native home. They were never married, but

* P. Martyr, D. 3, c. vi.

she considered herself his wife, as she really was, according to the usages of her own country, and he treated her with fondness, allowing her gradually to acquire great influence over him. To his affection for this damsel his ultimate ruin is in some measure to be ascribed.

CHAPTER III.

VASCO NUÑEZ HEARS OF A SEA BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.

VASCO NUÑEZ kept his word with the father of his Indian beauty. Taking with him eighty men and his companion-in-arms, Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares, he repaired by sea to Coyba, the province of the cacique. Here landing, he invaded the territories of Ponca, the great adversary of Careta, and obliged him to take refuge in the mountains. He then ravaged his lands and sacked his villages, in which he found considerable booty. Returning to Coyba, where he was joyfully entertained by Careta, he next made a friendly visit to the adjacent province of Comagre, which was under the sway of a cacique of the same name, who had 3,000 fighting men at his command.

This province was situated at the foot of a lofty mountain in a beautiful plain twelve leagues in extent. On the approach of Vasco Nuñez, the cacique came forth to meet him attended by seven sons, all fine young men, the offspring of his various wives. He was followed by his principal chiefs and warriors, and by a multitude of his people. The Spaniards were conducted with great ceremony to the village, where quarters were assigned them, and they were furnished with abundance of provisions, and men and women were appointed to attend upon them.

The dwelling of the cacique surpassed any they had yet seen for magnitude and for the skill and solidity of the architecture. It was one hundred and fifty paces in length, and eighty in breadth, founded upon great logs surrounded with a stone wall; while the upper part was of wood-work, curiously interwoven and wrought with such beauty, as to fill the Spaniards with surprise and admiration. It contained many commodious apartments. There were store-rooms also; one filled with bread, with venison, and other provisions; another with various spirituous beverages which the Indians made from

maize, from a species of the palm, and from roots of different kinds. There was also a great hall in a retired and secret part of the building, wherein Comagre preserved the bodies of his ancestors and relatives. These had been dried by the fire, so as to free them from corruption, and afterwards wrapped in mantles of cotton richly wrought and interwoven with pearls and jewels of gold, and with certain stones held precious by the natives. They were then hung about the hall with cords of cotton, and regarded with great reverence, if not a species of religious devotion.

Among the sons of the cacique, the eldest was of a lofty and generous spirit, and distinguished above the rest by his superior intelligence and sagacity. Perceiving, says old Peter Martyr, that the Spaniards were a "wandering kind of men, living only by shifts and spoil," he sought to gain favour for himself and family by gratifying their avarice. He gave Vasco Nuñez and Colmenares, therefore, 4,000 ounces of gold, wrought into various ornaments, together with sixty slaves, being captives that he had taken in the wars. Vasco Nuñez ordered one-fifth of the gold to be weighed out and set apart for the crown, and the rest to be shared among his followers.

The division of the gold took place in the porch of the dwelling of Comagre, in the presence of the youthful cacique who had made the gift. As the Spaniards were weighing it out, a violent quarrel arose among them as to the size and value of the pieces which fell to their respective shares. The high-minded savage was disgusted at this sordid brawl among beings whom he had regarded with such reverence. In the first impulse of his disdain, he struck the scales with his fist and scattered the glittering gold about the porch. Before the Spaniards could recover from their astonishment at this sudden act, he thus addressed them, "Why should you quarrel for such a trifle? If this gold is indeed so precious in your eyes that for it alone you abandon your homes, invade the peaceful land of others, and expose yourselves to such sufferings and perils, I will tell you of a region where you may gratify your wishes to the utmost. Behold those lofty mountains," continued he, pointing to the south. "Beyond these lies a mighty sea, which may be discerned from their summit. It is navigated by people who have vessels almost as large as yours, and furnished, like them, with sails and oars. All the streams which flow down the southern side of those mountains

into that sea abound in gold, and the kings who reign upon its borders eat and drink out of golden vessels. Gold, in fact, is as plentiful and common among those people of the south as iron is among you Spaniards."

Struck with this intelligence, Vasco Nuñez inquired eagerly as to the means of penetrating to this sea and to the opulent regions on its shores. "The task," replied the prince, "is difficult and dangerous. You must pass through the territories of many powerful caciques, who will oppose you with hosts of warriors. Some parts of the mountains are infested by fierce and cruel cannibals—a wandering, lawless race; but, above all, you will have to encounter the great cacique, Tubanamá, whose territories are at the distance of six days' journey, and more rich in gold than any other province; this cacique will be sure to come forth against you with a mighty force. To accomplish your enterprise, therefore, will require at least a thousand men armed like those who follow you."

The youthful cacique gave him further information on the subject, collected from various captives whom he had taken in battle, and from one of his own nation, who had been for a long time in captivity to Tubanamá, the powerful cacique of the golden realm. The prince, moreover, offered to prove the sincerity of his words by accompanying Vasco Nuñez in any expedition to those parts at the head of his father's warriors.

Such was the first intimation received by Vasco Nuñez of the Pacific Ocean and its golden realms, and it had an immediate effect upon his whole character and conduct. This hitherto wandering and desperate man had now an enterprise opened to his ambition, which, if accomplished, would elevate him to fame and fortune, and entitle him to rank among the great captains and discoverers of the earth. Henceforth the discovery of the sea beyond the mountains was the great object of his thoughts, and his whole spirit seemed roused and ennobled by the idea.

He hastened his return to Darien, to make the necessary preparations for this splendid enterprise. Before departing from the province of Comagre he baptized that cacique by the name of Don Carlos, and performed the same ceremony upon his sons and several of his subjects;—thus singularly did avarice and religion go hand in hand in the conduct of the Spanish discoverers.

Scarcely had Vasco Nuñez returned to Darien when the Regidor Valdivia arrived there from Hispaniola, but with no

more provisions than could be brought in his small caravel. These were soon consumed, and the general scarcity continued. It was heightened also by a violent tempest of thunder, lightning, and rain, which brought such torrents from the mountains that the river swelled and overflowed its banks, laying waste all the adjacent fields that had been cultivated. In this extremity Vasco Nuñez despatched Valdivia a second time to Hispaniola for provisions. Animated also by the loftier views of his present ambition, he wrote to Don Diego Columbus, who governed at San Domingo, informing him of the intelligence he had received of a great sea and opulent realms beyond the mountains, and entreating him to use his influence with the king that one thousand men might be immediately furnished him for the prosecution of so grand a discovery. He sent him also the amount of fifteen thousand crowns in gold, to be remitted to the king as the royal fifths of what had already been collected under his jurisdiction. Many of his followers, also, forwarded sums of gold to be remitted to their creditors in Spain. In the mean time, Vasco Nuñez prayed the admiral to yield him prompt succour to enable him to keep his footing in the land, representing the difficulty he had in maintaining, with a mere handful of men, so vast a country in a state of subjection.

CHAPTER IV.

EXPEDITION OF VASCO NUÑEZ IN QUEST OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE OF DOBAYBA.—(1512.)

WHILE Vasco Nuñez awaited the result of this mission of Valdivia, his active disposition prompted him to undertake foraging excursions into the surrounding country.

Among various rumours of golden realms in the interior of this unknown land, was one concerning a province called Dobayba, situated about forty leagues distant, on the banks of a great river which emptied itself, by several mouths, into a corner of the Gulf of Uraba.

This province derived its name, according to Indian tradition, from a mighty female of the olden time, the mother of the god who created the sun and moon and all good things. She had power over the elements, sending thunder and light

ning to lay waste the lands of those who displeased her, but showering down fertility and abundance upon the lands of her faithful worshippers. Others described her as having been an Indian princess who once reigned amongst the mountains of Dobayba, and was renowned throughout the land for her supernatural power and wisdom. After her death, divine honours were paid her, and a great temple was erected for her worship. Hither the natives repaired from far and near, on a kind of pilgrimage, bearing offerings of their most valuable effects. The caciques who ruled over distant territories, also sent golden tributes, at certain times of the year, to be deposited in this temple, and slaves to be sacrificed at its shrine. At one time, it was added, this worship fell into disuse, the pilgrimages were discontinued, and the caciques neglected to send their tributes; whereupon the deity, as a punishment, inflicted a drought upon the country. The springs and fountains failed, the rivers were dried up; the inhabitants of the mountains were obliged to descend into the plains, where they dugged pits and wells, but these likewise failing, a great part of the nations perished with thirst. The remainder hastened to propitiate the deity by tributes and sacrifices, and thus succeeded in averting her displeasure. In consequence of offerings of the kind, made for generations from all parts of the country, the temple was said to be filled with treasure, and its walls to be covered with golden gifts.* In addition to the tale of this temple, the Indians gave marvellous accounts of the general wealth of this province, declaring that it abounded with mines of gold, the veins of which reached from the dwelling of the cacique to the borders of his dominions.

To penetrate to this territory, and above all to secure the treasures of the golden temple, was an enterprise suited to the adventurous spirit of the Spaniards. Vasco Nufiez chose one hundred and seventy of his hardiest men for the purpose. Embarking them in two brigantines and a number of canoes, he set sail from Darien, and, after standing about nine leagues to the east, came to the mouth of the Rio Grande de San Juan, or the Great River of St. John, also called the Atrato, which is since ascertained to be one of the branches of the river Darien. Here he detached Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares with one-third of his forces to explore the stream, while he himself proceeded with the residue to another branch of the river, which

* P. Martyr, decad. 3, c. vi. Idem. d. 7, c. x.

he was told flowed from the province of Dobayba, and which he ascended, flushed with sanguine expectations.*

His old enemy, Zemaco, the cacique of Darien, however, had discovered the object of his expedition, and had taken measures to disappoint it: repairing to the province of Dobayba, he had prevailed upon its cacique to retire at the approach of the Spaniards, leaving his country deserted.

Vasco Nuñez found a village situated in a marshy neighbourhood, on the banks of the river, and mistook it for the residence of the cacique: it was silent and abandoned. There was not an Indian to be met with from whom he could obtain any information about the country, or who could guide him to the golden temple. He was disappointed, also, in his hopes of obtaining a supply of provisions, but he found weapons of various kinds hanging in the deserted houses, and gathered jewels and pieces of gold to the value of seven thousand castellanos. Discouraged by the savage look of the surrounding wilderness, which was perplexed by deep morasses, and having no guides to aid him in exploring it, he put all the booty he had collected into two large canoes, and made his way back to the Gulf of Uraba. Here he was assailed by a violent tempest, which nearly wrecked his two brigantines, and obliged him to throw a great part of their cargoes overboard. The two canoes containing the booty were swallowed up by the raging sea, and all their crews perished.

Thus baffled and tempest-tost, Vasco Nuñez at length succeeded in getting into what was termed the Grand River, which he ascended, and rejoined Colmenares and his detachment. They now extended their excursions up a stream which emptied into the Grand River, and which, from the dark hue of its waters, they called Rio Negro, or the Black River. They also explored certain other tributary streams branching from it, though not without occasional skirmishes with the natives.

* In recording this expedition, the author has followed the old Spanish narratives, written when the face of the country was but little known, and he was much perplexed to reconcile the accounts given of numerous streams with the rivers laid down on modern maps. By a clear and judicious explanation, given in the recent work of Don Manuel Josef Quintana, it appears that the different streams explored by Vasco Nuñez and Colmenares were all branches of one grand river, which, descending from the mountains of the interior, winds about in crystal streams among the plains and morasses bordering the bottom of the great Gulf of Darien, and discharges itself by various mouths into the gulf. In fact, the stream which ran by the infant city of Santa Maria de la Antigua was but one of its branches, a fact entirely unknown to Vasco Nuñez and his companions.

Ascending one of these minor rivers with a part of his men, Vasco Nuñez came to the territories of a cacique named Abibeyba, who reigned over a region of marshes and shallow lakes. The habitations of the natives were built amidst the branches of immense and lofty trees. They were large enough to contain whole family connexions, and were constructed partly of wood, partly of a kind of wicker work, combining strength and pliability, and yielding uninjured to the motion of the branches when agitated by the wind. The inhabitants ascended to them with great agility by light ladders, formed of great reeds split through the middle, for the reeds on this coast grow to the thickness of a man's body. These ladders they drew up after them at night, or in case of attack. These habitations were well stocked with provisions; but the fermented beverages, of which these people had always a supply, were buried in vessels in the earth at the foot of the tree, lest they should be rendered turbid by the rocking of the houses. Close by, also, were the canoes with which they navigated the rivers and ponds of their marshy country and followed their main occupation of fishing.

On the approach of the Spaniards, the Indians took refuge in their tree-built castles and drew up the ladders. The former called upon them to descend and to fear nothing. Upon this the cacique replied, entreating that he might not be molested, seeing he had done them no injury. They threatened, unless he came down, to fell the trees or to set fire to them, and burn him and his wives and children. The cacique was disposed to consent, but was prevented by the entreaties of his people. Upon this the Spaniards prepared to hew down the trees, but were assailed by showers of stones. They covered themselves, however, with their bucklers, assailed the trees vigorously with their hatchets, and soon compelled the inhabitants to capitulate. The cacique descended with his wife and two of his children. The first demand of the Spaniards was for gold. He assured them he had none; for, having no need of it, he had never made it an object of his search. Being importuned, however, he assured them that if he were permitted to repair to certain mountains at a distance, he would in a few days return and bring them what they desired. They permitted him to depart, retaining his wife and children as hostages, but they saw no more of the cacique. After remaining here a few days and regaling on the provisions which they found in abundance, they continued their foraging expeditions, often opposed by

the bold and warlike natives, and suffering occasional loss, but inflicting great havoc on their opposers.

Having thus overrun a considerable extent of country, and no grand object presenting to lure him on to further enterprise, Vasco Nuñez at length returned to Darien with the spoils and captives he had taken, leaving Bartolome Hurtado with thirty men in an Indian village on the Rio Negro, or Black River, to hold the country in subjection. Thus terminated the first expedition in quest of the golden temple Dobayba, which for some time continued to be a favourite object of enterprise among the adventurers of Darien.

CHAPTER V.

DISASTER ON THE BLACK RIVER—INDIAN PLOT AGAINST DARIEN.

BARTOLOME HURTADO being left to his own discretion on the banks of the Black River, occupied himself occasionally in hunting the scattered natives who straggled about the surrounding forests. Having in this way picked up twenty-four captives, he put them on board of a large canoe, like so much live stock, to be transported to Darien and sold as slaves. Twenty of his followers who were infirm, either from wounds or the diseases of the climate, embarked also in the canoe, so that only ten men remained with Hurtado.

The great canoe, thus heavily freighted, descended the Black River slowly, between banks overhung with forests. Zemaco, the indefatigable cacique of Darien, was on the watch, and waylaid the ark with four canoes filled with warriors armed with war clubs, and lances hardened in the fire. The Spaniards being sick, could make but feeble resistance; some were massacred, others leaped into the river and were drowned. Two only escaped, by clinging to two trunks of trees that were floating down the river and covering themselves with the branches. Reaching the shore in safety, they returned to Bartolome Hurtado with the tragical tidings of the death of his followers. Hurtado was so disheartened by the news, and so dismayed at his own helpless situation, in the midst of a hostile country, that he resolved to abandon the fatal shores of the Black River and return to Darien. He was quickened in this resolution by receiving intimation of a con-

spiracy forming among the natives. The implacable Zemaco had drawn four other caciques into a secret plan to assemble their vassals and make a sudden attack upon Darien. Hurtado hastened with the remnant of his followers to carry tidings to the settlement of this conspiracy. Many of the inhabitants were alarmed at his intelligence; others treated it as a false rumour of the Indians, and no preparations were made against what might be a mere imaginary danger.

Fortunately for the Spaniards, among the female captives owned by Vasco Nuñez was an Indian damsel named Fulvia, to whom, in consequence of her beauty, he had shown great favour, and who had become strongly attached to him. She had a brother among the warriors of Zemaco, who often visited her in secret. In one of his visits he informed her that on a certain night the settlement would be attacked and every Spaniard destroyed. He charged her, therefore, to hide herself that night in a certain place until he should come to her aid, lest she should be slain in the confusion of the massacre.

When her brother was gone a violent struggle took place in the bosom of the Indian girl, between her feeling for her family and her people and her affection for Vasco Nuñez. The latter at length prevailed, and she revealed all that had been told to her. Vasco Nuñez prevailed upon her to send for her brother under pretence of aiding her to escape. Having him in his power, he extorted from him all that he knew of the designs of the enemy. His confessions showed what imminent danger had been lurking round Vasco Nuñez in his most unsuspecting moments. The prisoner informed him that he had been one of forty Indians sent some time before by the cacique Zemaco to Vasco Nuñez, in seeming friendship, to be employed by him in cultivating the fields adjacent to the settlement. They had secret orders, however, to take an opportunity when Vasco Nuñez should come forth to inspect their work, to set upon him in an unguarded moment and destroy him. Fortunately, Vasco Nuñez always visited the fields mounted on his war horse and armed with lance and target. The Indians were therefore so awed by his martial appearance, and by the terrible animal he bestrode, that they dared not attack him.

Foiled in this and other attempts of the kind, Zemaco resorted to the conspiracy with the neighbouring caciques with which the settlement was menaced.

Five caciques had joined in the confederacy; they had prepared a hundred canoes, had amassed provisions for an

army, and had concerted to assemble five thousand picked warriors at a certain time and place; with these they were to make an attack on the settlement by land and water in the middle of the night and to slaughter every Spaniard.

Having learnt where the confederate chiefs were to be found, and where they had deposited their provisions, Vasco Nuñez chose seventy of his best men, well-armed, and made a circuit by land, while Colmenares, with sixty men, sallied forth secretly in four canoes guided by the Indian prisoner. In this way they surprised the general of the Indian army and several of the principal confederates, and got possession of all their provisions, though they failed to capture the formidable Zemaco. The Indian general was shot to death with arrows, and the leaders of the conspiracy were hanged in presence of their captive followers. The defeat of this deep-laid plan and the punishment of its devisers, spread terror throughout the neighbouring provinces and prevented any further attempt at hostility. Vasco Nuñez, however, caused a strong fortress of wood to be immediately erected to guard against any future assaults of the savages.

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER FACTIONS IN THE COLONY—ARROGANCE OF ALONZO PEREZ AND THE BACHELOR CORRAL.—(1512.)

A CONSIDERABLE time had now elapsed since the departure of Valdivia for Hispaniola, yet no tidings had been received from him. Many began to fear that some disaster had befallen him; while others insinuated that it was possible both he and Zamudio might have neglected the objects of their mission, and, having appropriated to their own use the gold with which they had been entrusted, might have abandoned the colony to its fate.

Vasco Nuñez himself was harassed by these surmises, and by the dread lest the Bachelor Enciso should succeed in prejudicing the mind of his sovereign against him. Impatient of this state of anxious suspense, he determined to repair to Spain to communicate in person all that he had heard concerning the Southern Sea, and to ask for the troops necessary for its discovery.

Every one, however, both friend and foe, exclaimed against such a measure, representing his presence as indispensable to the safety of the colony, from his great talents as a commander and the fear entertained of him by the Indians.

After much debate and contention, it was at length agreed that Juan de Cayzedo and Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares should go in his place, instructed to make all necessary representations to the king. Letters were written also containing the most extravagant accounts of the riches of the country, partly dictated by the sanguine hopes of the writers, and partly by the fables of the natives. The rumoured wealth of the province of Dobayba and the treasures of its golden temple were not forgotten; and an Indian was taken to Spain by the commissioners, a native of the province of Zenu, where gold was said to be gathered in nets stretched across the mountain streams. To give more weight to all these stories, every one contributed some portion of gold from his private hoard to be presented to the king in addition to the amount arising from his fifths.

But little time elapsed after the departure of the commissioners when new dissensions broke out in the colony. It was hardly to be expected that a fortuitous assemblage of adventurers could remain long tranquil during a time of suffering under rulers of questionable authority. Vasco Nuñez, it is true, had risen by his courage and abilities; but he had risen from among their ranks; he was, in a manner, of their own creation; and they had not become sufficiently accustomed to him as a governor to forget that he was recently but a mere soldier of fortune and an absconding debtor.

Their factious discontent, however, was directed at first against a favourite of Vasco Nuñez, rather than against himself. He had invested Bartolome Hurtado, the commander of the Black River, with considerable authority in the colony, and the latter gave great offence by his oppressive conduct. Hurtado had particularly aggrieved by his arrogance one Alonzo Perez de la Rua, a touchy cavalier, jealous of his honour, who seems to have peculiarly possessed the sensitive punctilio of a Spaniard. Firing at some indignity, whether real or fancied, Alonzo Perez threw himself into the ranks of the disaffected, and was immediately chosen as their leader. Thus backed by a faction, he clamoured loudly for the punishment of Hurtado; and, finding his demands unattended to, threw out threats of deposing Vasco Nuñez. The latter no

sooner heard of these menaces, than, with his usual spirit and promptness, he seized upon the testy Alonzo Perez and threw him in prison to digest his indignities and cool his passions at leisure.

The conspirators flew to arms to liberate their leader. The friends of Vasco Nuñez were equally on the alert. The two parties drew out in battle array in the public square, and a sanguinary conflict was on the point of taking place. Fortunately there were some cool heads left in the colony. These interfered at the critical moment, representing to the angry adversaries that if they fought among themselves, and diminished their already scanty numbers, even the conquerors must eventually fall a prey to the Indians.

Their remonstrances had effect. A parley ensued, and, after much noisy debate, a kind of compromise was made. Alonzo Perez was liberated, and the mutineers dispersed quietly to their homes. The next day, however, they were again in arms, and seized upon Bartolome Hurtado; but after a little while were prevailed upon to set him free. Their factious views seemed turned to a higher object. They broke forth into loud murmurs against Vasco Nuñez, complaining that he had not made a fair division of the gold and slaves taken in the late expeditions, and threatening to arrest him and bring him to account. Above all, they clamoured for an immediate distribution of ten thousand castellanos in gold, which yet remained unshared.

Vasco Nuñez understood too well the riotous nature of the people under him, and his own precarious hold on their obedience, to attempt to cope with them in this moment of turbulence. He shrewdly determined, therefore, to withdraw from the sight of the multitude, and to leave them to divide the spoil among themselves, trusting to their own strife for his security. That very night he sallied forth into the country, under pretence of going on a hunting expedition.

The next morning the mutineers found themselves in possession of the field. Alonzo Perez, the pragmatical ringleader, immediately assumed the command, seconded by the Bachelor Corral. Their first measure was to seize upon the ten thousand castellanos, and to divide them among the multitude, by way of securing their own popularity. The event proved the sagacity and forethought of Vasco Nuñez. Scarcely had these hot-headed intermeddlers entered upon the partition of the gold, than a furious strife arose. Every one was dissatisfied

with his share, considering his merits entitled to peculiar recompense. Every attempt to appease the rabble only augmented their violence, and in their rage they swore that Vasco Nuñez had always shown more judgment and discrimination in his distributions to men of merit.

The adherents of the latter now ventured to lift up their voices; "Vasco Nuñez," said they, "won the gold by his enterprise and valour, and would have shared it with the brave and the deserving; but these men have seized upon it by factious means, and would squander it upon their minions." The multitude, who, in fact, admired the soldier-like qualities of Vasco Nuñez, displayed one of the customary reverses of popular feeling. The touchy Alonzo Perez, his coadjutor the Bachelor Corral, and several other of the ringleaders were seized, thrown in irons, and confined in the fortress; and Vasco Nuñez was recalled with loud acclamations to the settlement.

How long this pseudo commander might have been able to manage the unsteady populace it is impossible to say, but just at this juncture two ships arrived from Hispaniola, freighted with supplies, and bringing a reinforcement of one hundred and fifty men. They brought also a commission to Vasco Nuñez, signed by Miguel de Pasamonte, the royal treasurer of Hispaniola, to whom he had sent a private present of gold, constituting him captain-general of the colony. It is doubtful whether Pasamonte possessed the power to confer such a commission, though it is affirmed that the king had clothed him with it, as a kind of check upon the authority of the admiral Don Diego Columbus, then Governor of Hispaniola, of whose extensive sway in the new world the monarch was secretly jealous. At any rate the treasurer appears to have acted in full confidence of the ultimate approbation of his sovereign.

Vasco Nuñez was rejoiced at receiving a commission which clothed him with at least the semblance of royal sanction. Feeling more assured in his situation, and being naturally of a generous and forgiving temper, he was easily prevailed upon, in his moment of exultation, to release and pardon Alonzo Perez, the Bachelor Corral, and the other ringleaders of the late commotions, and for a time the feuds and factions of this petty community were lulled to repose.

CHAPTER VII.

VASCO NUÑEZ DETERMINES TO SEEK THE SEA BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.—(1513.)

THE temporary triumph of Vasco Nuñez was soon overcast by tidings received from Spain. His late colleague, the Alcalde Zamudio, wrote him word that the Bachelor Enciso had carried his complaints to the foot of the throne, and succeeded in rousing the indignation of the king, and had obtained a sentence in his favour, condemning Vasco Nuñez in costs and damages. Zamudio informed him in addition, that he would be immediately summoned to repair to Spain, and answer in person the criminal charges advanced against him on account of the harsh treatment and probable death of the unfortunate Nicuesa.

Vasco Nuñez was at first stunned by this intelligence, which seemed at one blow to annihilate all his hopes and fortunes. He was a man, however, of prompt decision and intrepid spirit. The information received from Spain was private and informal, no order had yet arrived from the king, he was still master of his actions, and had control over the colony. One brilliant achievement might atone for all the past, and fix him in the favour of the monarch. Such an achievement was within his reach—the discovery of the southern sea. It is true, a thousand soldiers had been required for the expedition, but were he to wait for their arrival from Spain, his day of grace would be past. It was a desperate thing to undertake the task with the handful of men at his command, but the circumstances of the case were desperate. Fame, fortune, life itself, depended upon the successful and the prompt execution of the enterprise. To linger was to be lost.

Vasco Nuñez looked round upon the crew of daring and reckless adventurers that formed the colony, and chose one hundred and ninety of the most resolute and vigorous, and of those most devoted to his person. These he armed with swords, targets, cross-bows, and arquebusses. He did not conceal from them the peril of the enterprise into which he was about to lead them; but the spirit of these Spanish adventurers was always roused by the idea of perilous and extravagant exploit. To aid his slender forces, he took with him a number of blood-

hounds, which had been found to be terrific allies in Indian warfare.

The Spanish writers make particular mention of one of those animals, named Leoncico, which was a constant companion, and, as it were, body-guard of Vasco Nuñez, and describe him as minutely as they would a favourite warrior. He was of a middle size, but immensely strong: of a dull yellow or reddish colour, with a black muzzle, and his body was scarred all over with wounds received in innumerable battles with the Indians. Vasco Nuñez always took him on his expeditions, and sometimes lent him to others, receiving for his services the same share of booty allotted to an armed man. In this way he gained by him, in the course of his campaigns, upwards of a thousand crowns. The Indians, it is said, had conceived such terror of this animal, that the very sight of him was sufficient to put a host of them to flight.*

In addition to these forces, Vasco Nuñez took with him a number of the Indians of Darien, whom he had won to him by kindness, and whose services were important, from their knowledge of the wilderness, and of the habits and resources of savage life. Such was the motley armament that set forth from the little colony of Darien, under the guidance of a daring, if not desperate commander, in quest of the great Pacific Ocean.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXPEDITION IN QUEST OF THE SOUTHERN SEA.

It was on the first of September that Vasco Nuñez embarked with his followers in a brigantine and nine large canoes or pirogues, followed by the cheers and good wishes of those who remained at the settlement. Standing to the north-westward, he arrived without accident at Coyba, the dominions of the cacique Careta, whose daughter he had received as a pledge of amity. That Indian beauty had acquired a great influence over Vasco Nuñez, and appears to have cemented his friendship with her father and her people. He was received by the cacique with open arms, and furnished with guides and warriors to aid him in his enterprise. ,

* Oviedo, Hist. Indies, p. 2, c. 3, MS.

Vasco Nuñez left about half of his men at Coyba to guard the brigantine and canoes, while he should penetrate the wilderness with the residue. The importance of this present expedition, not merely as affecting his own fortunes, but as it were unfolding a mighty secret of nature, seems to have impressed itself upon his spirit, and to have given corresponding solemnity to his conduct. Before setting out upon his march, he caused mass to be performed, and offered up prayers to God for the success of his perilous undertaking.

It was on the sixth of September that he struck off for the mountains. The march was difficult and toilsome in the extreme. The Spaniards, encumbered with the weight of their armour and weapons, and oppressed by the heat of a tropical climate, were obliged to climb rocky precipices, and to struggle through close and tangled forests. Their Indian allies aided them by carrying their ammunition and provisions, and by guiding them to the most practicable paths.

On the eighth of September they arrived at the village of Ponca, the ancient enemy of Careta. The village was lifeless and abandoned; the cacique and his people had fled to the fastnesses of the mountains. The Spaniards remained here several days to recruit the health of some of their number who had fallen ill. It was necessary also to procure guides acquainted with the mountain wilderness they were approaching. The retreat of Ponca was at length discovered, and he was prevailed upon, though reluctantly, to come to Vasco Nuñez. The latter had a peculiar facility in winning the confidence and friendship of the natives. The cacique was soon so captivated by his kindness, that he revealed to him in secret all he knew of the natural riches of the country. He assured him of the truth of what had been told him about a great pechry or sea beyond the mountains, and gave him several ornaments ingeniously wrought of fine gold, which had been brought from the countries upon its borders. He told him, moreover, that when he had attained the summit of a lofty ridge, to which he pointed, and which seemed to rise up to the skies, he would behold that sea spread out far below him.

Animated by the accounts, Vasco Nuñez procured fresh guides from the cacique, and prepared to ascend the mountains. Numbers of his men having fallen ill from fatigue and the heat of the climate, he ordered them to return slowly to Coyba, taking with him none but such as were in robust and vigorous health.

On the 20th of September, he again set forward through a broken rocky country, covered with a matted forest, and intersected by deep and turbulent streams, many of which it was necessary to cross upon rafts.

So toilsome was the journey, that in four days they did not advance above ten leagues, and in the mean time they suffered excessively from hunger. At the end of this time they arrived at the province of a warlike cacique, named Quaraqua, who was at war with Ponca.

Hearing that a band of strangers were entering his territories, guided by the subjects of his inveterate foe, the cacique took the field with a large number of warriors, some armed with bows and arrows, others with long spears, or with double-handed maces of palm-wood, almost as heavy and hard as iron. Seeing the inconsiderable number of the Spaniards, they set upon them with furious yells, thinking to overcome them in an instant. The first discharge of fire-arms, however, struck them with dismay. They thought they were contending with demons who vomited forth thunder and lightning, especially when they saw their companions fall bleeding and dead beside them, without receiving any apparent blow. They took to headlong flight, and were hotly pursued by the Spaniards and their bloodhounds. Some were transfixed with lances, others hewn down with swords, and many were torn to pieces by the dogs, so that Quaraqua and six hundred of his warriors were left dead upon the field.

A brother of the cacique and several chiefs were taken prisoners. They were clad in robes of white cotton. Either from their effeminate dress, or from the accusations of their enemies, the Spaniards were induced to consider them guilty of unnatural crimes, and, in their abhorrence and disgust, gave them to be torn to pieces by the bloodhounds.*

It is also affirmed, that among the prisoners were several negroes, who had been slaves to the cacique. The Spaniards, we are told, were informed by the other captives, that these black men came from a region at no great distance, where there was a people of that colour with whom they were frequently at war. "These," adds the Spanish writer, "were the first negroes ever found in the New World, and I believe no others have since been discovered."†

* Herrera. Hist. Ind. d. 1. l. x. c. 1.

† Peter Martyr, in his third Decade, makes mention of these negroes in the fol-

After this sanguinary triumph, the Spaniards marched to the village of Quaraqua, where they found considerable booty in gold and jewels. Of this Vasco Nuñez reserved one-fifth for the crown, and shared the rest liberally among his followers. The village was at the foot of the last mountain that remained for them to climb; several of the Spaniards, however, were so disabled by the wounds they had received in battle, or so exhausted by the fatigue and hunger they had endured, that they were unable to proceed. They were obliged, therefore, reluctantly to remain in the village, within sight of the mountain-top that commanded the long-sought prospect. Vasco Nuñez selected fresh guides from among his prisoners, who were natives of the province, and sent back the subjects of Ponca. Of the band of Spaniards who had set out with him in this enterprise, sixty-seven alone remained in sufficient health and spirits for this last effort. These he ordered to retire early to repose, that they might be ready to set off at the cool and fresh hour of day-break, so as to reach the summit of the mountain before the noon-tide heat.

CHAPTER IX.

DISCOVERY OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

THE day had scarcely dawned, when Vasco Nuñez and his followers set forth from the Indian village and began to climb the height. It was a severe and rugged toil for men so way-worn, but they were filled with new ardour at the idea of the triumphant scene that was so soon to repay them for all their hardships.

About ten o'clock in the morning they emerged from the thick forests through which they had hitherto struggled, and arrived at a lofty and airy region of the mountain. The bald

lowing words:—"About two days' journey distant from Quaraqua is a region inhabited only by black Moors, exceeding fierce and cruel. It is supposed that in time past certain black Moors sailed thither out of Ethiopia, to rob, and that by shipwreck, or some other chance, they were driven to these mountains." As Martyr lived and wrote at the time, he of course related the mere rumour of the day, which all subsequent accounts have disproved. The other historians who mentioned the circumstance, have probably repeated it from him. It must have risen from some misrepresentation, and is not entitled to credit.

summit alone remained to be ascended, and their guides pointed to a moderate eminence from which they said the southern sea was visible.

Upon this Vasco Nuñez commanded his followers to halt, and that no man should stir from his place. Then, with a palpitating heart, he ascended alone the bare mountain-top. On reaching the summit the long-desired prospect burst upon his view. It was as if a new world were unfolded to him, separated from all hitherto known by this mighty barrier of mountains. Below him extended a vast chaos of rock and forest, and green savannahs and wandering streams, while at a distance the waters of the promised ocean glittered in the morning sun.

At this glorious prospect Vasco Nuñez sank upon his knees, and poured out thanks to God for being the first European to whom it was given to make that great discovery. He then called his people to ascend: "Behold, my friends," said he, "that glorious sight which we have so much desired. Let us give thanks to God that he has granted us this great honour and advantage. Let us pray to him that he will guide and aid us to conquer the sea and land which we have discovered, and in which Christian has never entered to preach the holy doctrine of the Evangelists. As to yourselves, be as you have hitherto been, faithful and true to me, and by the favour of Christ you will become the richest Spaniards that have ever come to the Indies; you will render the greatest services to your king that ever vassal rendered to his lord; and you will have the eternal glory and advantage of all that is here discovered, conquered, and converted to our holy Catholic faith."

The Spaniards answered this speech by embracing Vasco Nuñez and promising to follow him to death. Among them was a priest, named Andres de Vara, who lifted up his voice and chanted *Te Deum laudamus*—the usual anthem of Spanish discoverers. The people, kneeling down, joined in the strain with pious enthusiasm and tears of joy; and never did a more sincere oblation rise to the Deity from a sanctified altar than from that wild mountain summit. It was indeed one of the most sublime discoveries that had yet been made in the New World, and must have opened a boundless field of conjecture to the wondering Spaniards. The imagination delights to picture forth the splendid confusion of their thoughts. Was this the great Indian Ocean, studded with precious islands, abounding in gold, in gems, and spices, and bordered by the gorgeous

cities and wealthy marts of the East? Or was it some lonely sea locked up in the embraces of savage uncultivated continents, and never traversed by a bark, excepting the light pirogue of the Indian? The latter could hardly be the case, for the natives had told the Spaniards of golden realms, and populous and powerful and luxurious nations upon its shores. Perhaps it might be bordered by various people, civilized in fact, but differing from Europe in their civilization; who might have peculiar laws and customs and arts and sciences; who might form, as it were, a world of their own, intercommuning by this mighty sea, and carrying on commerce between their own islands and continents; but who might exist in total ignorance and independence of the other hemisphere.

Such may naturally have been the ideas suggested by the sight of this unknown ocean. It was the prevalent belief of the Spaniards, however, that they were the first Christians who had made the discovery. Vasco Nuñez, therefore, called upon all present to witness that he took possession of that sea, its islands, and surrounding lands, in the name of the sovereigns of Castile, and the notary of the expedition made a testimonial of the same, to which all present, to the number of sixty-seven men, signed their names. He then caused a fair and tall tree to be cut down and wrought into a cross, which was elevated on the spot from whence he had at first beheld the sea. A mound of stones was likewise piled up to serve as a monument, and the names of the Castilian sovereigns were carved on the neighbouring trees. The Indians beheld all these ceremonials and rejoicings in silent wonder, and, while they aided to erect the cross and pile up the mound of stones, marvelled exceedingly at the meaning of these monuments, little thinking that they marked the subjugation of their land.

The memorable event here recorded took place on the 26th of September, 1513; so that the Spaniards had been twenty days performing the journey from the province of Careta to the summit of the mountain, a distance which at present, it is said, does not require more than six days' travel. Indeed the isthmus in this neighbourhood is not more than eighteen leagues in breadth in its widest part, and in some places merely seven; but it consists of a ridge of extremely high and rugged mountains. When the discoverers traversed it, they had no route but the Indian paths, and often had to force their way amidst all kinds of obstacles, both from the savage country and its savage inhabitants. In fact the details of

this narrative sufficiently account for the slowness of their progress, and present an array of difficulties and perils which, as has been well observed, none but those "men of iron" could have subdued and overcome.*

CHAPTER X.

VASCO NUÑEZ MARCHES TO THE SHORES OF THE SOUTH SEA.

HAVING taken possession of the Pacific Ocean and all its realms from the summit of the mountain, Vasco Nuñez now descended with his little band to seek the regions of reputed wealth upon its shores. He had not proceeded far when he came to the province of a warlike cacique, named Chiapes, who, issuing forth at the head of his warriors, looked with scorn upon the scanty number of straggling Spaniards, and forbade them to set foot within his territories. Vasco Nuñez depended for safety upon his power of striking terror into the ignorant savages. Ordering his arquebusiers to the front, he poured a volley into the enemy, and then let loose the bloodhounds. The flash and noise of the fire-arms, and the sulphurous smoke which was carried by the wind among the Indians, overwhelmed them with dismay. Some fell down in a panic as though they had been struck by thunderbolts, the rest betook themselves to headlong flight.

Vasco Nuñez commanded his men to refrain from needless slaughter. He made many prisoners, and on arriving at the village, sent some of them in search of their cacique, accompanied by several of his Indian guides. The latter informed Chiapes of the supernatural power of the Spaniards, assuring him that they exterminated with thunder and lightning all who dared to oppose them, but loaded all such as submitted to them with benefits. They advised him, therefore, to throw himself upon their mercy and seek their friendship.

The cacique listened to their advice, and came trembling to the Spaniards, bringing with him five hundred pounds weight of wrought gold as a peace offering, for he had already learnt the value they set upon that metal. Vasco Nuñez received

* *Vidas de Espanoles Célebres*, por Don Manuel Josef Quintana. Tom. ii. p. 40.

him with great kindness, and graciously accepted his gold, for which he gave him beads, hawks' bells, and looking-glasses, making him, in his own conceit, the richest potentate on that side of the mountains.

Friendship being thus established between them, Vasco Nuñez remained at the village for a few days, sending back the guides who had accompanied him from Quaraqua, and ordering his people, whom he had left at that place, to rejoin him. In the mean time he sent out three scouting parties, of twelve men each, under Francisco Pizarro, Juan de Escary, and Alonzo Martin de Don Benito, to explore the surrounding country and discover the best route to the sea. Alonzo Martin was the most successful. After two days' journey he came to a beach, where he found two large canoes lying high and dry, without any water being in sight. While the Spaniards were regarding these canoes, and wondering why they should be so far on land, the tide, which rises to a great height on that coast, came rapidly in and set them afloat; upon this, Alonzo Martin stepped into one of them, and called his companions to bear witness that he was the first European that embarked upon that sea; his example was followed by one Blas de Etienza, who called them likewise to testify that he was the second.*

We mention minute particulars of the kind as being characteristic of these extraordinary enterprises, and of the extraordinary people who undertook them. The humblest of these Spanish adventurers seemed actuated by a swelling and ambitious spirit, that rose superior at times to mere sordid considerations, and aspired to share the glory of these great discoveries. The scouting party having thus explored a direct route to the sea coast, returned to report their success to their commander.

Vasco Nuñez being rejoined by his men from Quaraqua, now left the greater part of his followers to repose and recover from their sickness and fatigues in the village of Chiapes, and, taking with him twenty-six Spaniards, well armed, he set out on the twenty-ninth of September, for the sea coast, accompanied by the cacique and a number of his warriors. The thick forest which covered the mountains descended to the very margin of the sea, surrounding and overshadowing the wide and beautiful bays that penetrated far into the land. The whole coast, as far as the eye could reach, was perfectly

* Herrera, Hist. Ind. d. i. l. x. c. 2.

wild, the sea without a sail, and both seemed never to have been under the dominion of civilized man.

Vasco Nuñez arrived on the borders of one of those vast bays, to which he gave the name of Saint Michael, it being discovered on that saint's day. The tide was out, the water was above half a league distant, and the intervening beach was covered with mud; he seated himself, therefore, under the shade of the forest trees until the tide should rise. After a while the water came rushing in with great impetuosity, and soon reached nearly to the place where the Spaniards were reposing. Upon this, Vasco Nuñez rose and took a banner, on which were painted the Virgin and child, and under them the arms of Castile and Leon; then drawing his sword and throwing his buckler on his shoulder, he marched into the sea until the water reached above his knees, and waving his banner, exclaimed, with a loud voice, "Long live the high and mighty monarchs, Don Ferdinand and Donna Juanna, sovereigns of Castile, of Leon, and of Arragon, in whose name, and for the royal crown of Castile, I take real, and corporal, and actual possession of these seas, and lands, and coasts; and ports, and islands of the South, and all thereunto annexed; and of the kingdoms and provinces which do or may appertain to them in whatever manner, or by whatever right or title, ancient or modern, in times past, present, or to come, without any contradiction; and if other prince or captain, christian or infidel, or of any law, sect, or condition whatsoever, shall pretend any right to these lands and seas, I am ready and prepared to maintain and defend them in the name of the Castilian sovereigns, present and future, whose is the empire and dominion over these Indias, islands, and terra firma, northern and southern, with all their seas, both at the arctic and antarctic poles, on either side of the equinoxial line, whether within or without the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, both now and in all times, as long as the world endures, and until the final day of judgment of all mankind."

This swelling declaration and defiance being uttered with a loud voice, and no one appearing to dispute his pretensions, Vasco Nuñez called upon his companions to bear witness of the fact of his having duly taken possession. They all declared themselves ready to defend his claim to the uttermost, as became true and loyal vassals to the Castilian sovereigns; and the notary having drawn up a document for the occasion, they all subscribed it with their names.

This done, they advanced to the margin of the sea, and stooping down tasted its waters. When they found, that, though severed by intervening mountains and continents, they were salt like the seas of the north, they felt assured that they had indeed discovered an ocean, and again returned thanks to God.

Having concluded all these ceremonies, Vasco Nuñez drew a dagger from his girdle and cut a cross on a tree which grew within the water, and made two other crosses on two adjacent trees in honour of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and in token of possession. His followers likewise cut crosses on many of the trees of the adjacent forest, and lopped off branches with their swords to bear away as trophies.*

Such was the singular medley of chivalrous and religious ceremonial with which these Spanish adventurers took possession of the vast Pacific Ocean, and all its lands—a scene strongly characteristic of the nation and the age.

CHAPTER XI.

ADVENTURES OF VASCO NUÑEZ ON THE BORDERS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

WHILE he made the village of Chiapes his headquarters, Vasco Nuñez foraged the adjacent country and obtained a considerable quantity of gold from the natives. Encouraged by his success, he undertook to explore by sea the borders of a neighbouring gulf of great extent, which penetrated far into the land. The cacique Chiapes warned him of the danger of venturing to sea in the stormy season, which comprises the months of October, November, and December, assuring him that he had beheld many canoes swallowed up in the mighty waves and whirlpools, which at such times render the gulf almost unnavigable.

These remonstrances were unavailing: Vasco Nuñez expressed a confident belief that God would protect him, seeing that his voyage was to redound to the propagation of the faith,

* Many of the foregoing particulars are from the unpublished volume of Oviedo's History of the Indias.

and the augmentation of the power of the Castilian monarchs over the infidels; and in truth this bigoted reliance on the immediate protection of heaven seems to have been in a great measure the cause of the extravagant daring of the Spaniards in their expeditions in those days, whether against Moors or Indians.

Seeing his representations of no effect, Chiapes volunteered to take part in this perilous cruise, lest he should appear wanting in courage, or in good-will to his guest. Accompanied by the cacique, therefore, Vasco Nuñez embarked on the 17th of October with sixty of his men in nine canoes, managed by Indians, leaving the residue of his followers to recruit their health and strength in the village of Chiapes.

Scarcely, however, had they put forth on the broad bosom of the gulf when the wisdom of the cacique's advice was made apparent. The wind began to blow freshly, raising a heavy and tumultuous sea, which broke in roaring and foaming surges on the rocks and reefs, and among the numerous islets with which the gulf was studded. The light canoes were deeply laden with men unskilled in their management. It was frightful to those in one canoe to behold their companions, one instant tossed on high on the breaking crest of a wave, the next plunging out of sight, as if swallowed in a watery abyss. The Indians themselves, though almost amphibious in their habits, showed signs of consternation; for amidst these rocks and breakers even the skill of the expert swimmer would be of little avail. At length the Indians succeeded in tying the canoes in pairs, side by side, to prevent their being overturned, and in this way they kept afloat, until towards evening they were enabled to reach a small island. Here they landed, and fastening the canoes to the rocks, or to small trees that grew upon the shore, they sought an elevated dry place, and stretched themselves to take repose. They had but escaped from one danger to encounter another. Having been for a long time accustomed to the sea on the northern side of the isthmus, where there is little, if any, rise or fall of the tide, they had neglected to take any precaution against such an occurrence. In a little while they were awakened from their sleep by the rapid rising of the water. They shifted their situation to a higher ground, but the waters continued to gain upon them, the breakers rushing and roaring and foaming upon the beach like so many monsters of the deep seeking for their prey. Nothing, it is said, can be more dismal and ap-

palling than the sullen bellowing of the sea among the islands of that gulf at the rising and falling of the tide. By degrees, rock after rock, and one sand bank after another disappeared, until the sea covered the whole island, and rose almost to the girdles of the Spaniards. Their situation was now agonizing. A little more and the waters would overwhelm them; or, even as it was, the least surge might break over them and sweep them from their unsteady footing. Fortunately the wind had lulled, and the sea, having risen above the rocks which had fretted it, was calm. The tide had reached its height and began to subside, and after a time they heard the retiring waves beating against the rocks below them.

When the day dawned they sought their canoes; but here a sad spectacle met their eyes. Some were broken to pieces, others yawning open in many parts. The clothing and food left in them had been washed away, and replaced by sand and water. The Spaniards gazed on the scene in mute despair; they were faint and weary, and needed food and repose, but famine and labour awaited them, even if they should escape with their lives. Vasco Nuñez, however, rallied their spirits, and set them an example by his own cheerful exertions. Obeying his directions, they set to work to repair, in the best manner they were able, the damages of the canoes. Such as were not too much shattered they bound and braced up with their girdles, with slips of the bark of trees, or with the tough long stalks of certain sea-weeds. They then peeled off the bark from the small sea plants, pounded it between stones, and mixed it with grass, and with this endeavoured to caulk the seams and stop the leaks that remained. When they re-embarked, their numbers weighed down the canoes almost to the water's edge, and as they rose and sank with the swelling waves there was danger of their being swallowed up. All day they laboured with the sea, suffering excessively from the pangs of hunger and thirst, and at nightfall they landed in a corner of the gulf, near the abode of a cacique named Túmaco. Leaving a part of his men to guard the canoes, Vasco Nuñez set out with the residue for the Indian town. He arrived there about midnight, but the inhabitants were on the alert to defend their habitations. The fire-arms and dogs soon put them to flight, and the Spaniards pursuing them with their swords, drove them howling into the woods. In the village were found provisions in abundance, beside a considerable amount of gold and a great quantity of pearls, many of them of a large size. In the house

of the cacique were several huge shells of mother-of-pearl, and four pearl oysters quite fresh, which showed that there was a pearl fishery in the neighbourhood. Eager to learn the sources of this wealth, Vasco Nuñez sent several of the Indians of Chiapes in search of the cacique, who traced him to a wild retreat among the rocks. By their persuasions Túmaco sent his son, a fine young savage, as a mediator. The latter returned to his father loaded with presents, and extolling the benignity of these superhuman beings, who had shown themselves so terrible in battle. By these means, and by a mutual exchange of presents, a friendly intercourse was soon established. Among other things the cacique gave Vasco Nuñez jewels of gold weighing six hundred and fourteen crowns, and two hundred pearls of great size and beauty, excepting that they were somewhat discoloured in consequence of the oysters having been opened by fire.

The cacique seeing the value which the Spaniards set upon the pearls, sent a number of his men to fish for them at a place about ten miles distant. Certain of the Indians were trained from their youth to this purpose, so as to become expert divers, and to acquire the power of remaining a long time beneath the water. The largest pearls are generally found in the deepest waters, sometimes in three and four fathoms, and are only sought in calm weather; the smaller sort are found at the depth of two and three feet, and the oysters containing them are often driven in quantities on the beach during violent storms.

The party of pearl divers sent by the cacique consisted of thirty Indians, with whom Vasco Nuñez sent six Spaniards as eye-witnesses. The sea, however, was so furious at that stormy season that the divers dared not venture into the deep water. Such a number of the shell-fish, however, had been driven on shore, that they collected enough to yield pearls to the value of twelve marks of gold. They were small, but exceedingly beautiful, being newly taken and uninjured by fire. A number of these shell-fish and their pearls were selected to be sent to Spain as specimens.

In reply to the inquiries of Vasco Nuñez, the cacique informed him that the coast which he saw stretching to the west continued onwards without end, and that, far to the south there was a country abounding in gold, where the inhabitants made use of certain quadrupeds to carry burthens. He moulded a figure of clay to represent these animals, which some of the

Spaniards supposed to be a deer, others a camel, others a tapir, for as yet they knew nothing of the lama, the native beast of burthen of South America. This was the second intimation received by Vasco Nuñez of the great empire of Peru; and, while it confirmed all that had been told him by the son of Comagre, it filled him with glowing anticipations of the glorious triumphs that awaited him.

CHAPTER XII.

FURTHER ADVENTURES AND EXPLOITS OF VASCO NUÑEZ ON THE BORDERS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

LEST any ceremonial should be wanting to secure this grand discovery to the crown of Spain, Vasco Nuñez determined to sally from the gulf and take possession of the main land beyond. The cacique Túmaco furnished him with a canoe of state, formed from the trunk of an enormous tree, and managed by a great number of Indians. The handles of the paddles were inlaid with small pearls, a circumstance which Vasco Nuñez caused his companions to testify before the notary, that it might be reported to the sovereigns as a proof of the wealth of this newly discovered sea.*

Departing in the canoe on the 29th of October, he was piloted cautiously by the Indians along the borders of the gulf, over drowned lands where the sea was fringed by inundated forests and as still as a pool. Arrived at the point of the gulf, Vasco Nuñez landed on a smooth sandy beach, laved by the waters of the broad ocean, and, with buckler on arm, sword in hand, and banner displayed, again marched into the sea and took possession of it, with like ceremonials to those observed in the Gulf of St. Michael's.

The Indians now pointed to a line of land rising above the horizon about four or five leagues distant, which they described as being a great island, the principal one of an archipelago. The whole group abounded with pearls, but those taken on the coasts of this island were represented as being of immense size, many of them as large as a man's eye, and found in shell-fish as

* Oviedo, Hist. Gen. p. 2, MS.

big as bucklers. This island and the surrounding cluster of small ones, they added, were under the dominion of a tyrannical and puissant cacique, who often, during the calm seasons, made descents upon the main land with fleets of canoes, plundering and desolating the coasts, and carrying the people into captivity.

Vasco Nuñez gazed with an eager and wistful eye at this land of riches, and would have immediately undertaken an expedition to it, had not the Indians represented the danger of venturing on such a voyage in that tempestuous season in their frail canoes. His own recent experience convinced him of the wisdom of their remonstrances. He postponed his visit, therefore, to a future occasion, when, he assured his allies, he would avenge them upon this tyrant invader, and deliver their coasts from his maraudings. In the mean time he gave to this island the name of *Isla Rica*, and the little archipelago surrounding it the general appellation of the *Pearl Islands*.

On the third of November Vasco Nuñez departed from the province of Tumaco, to visit other parts of the coast. He embarked with his men in the canoes, accompanied by Chiapes and his Indians, and guided by the son of Tumaco, who had become strongly attached to the Spaniards. The young man piloted them along an arm of the sea, wide in some places, but in others obstructed by groves of mangrove trees, which grew within the water and interlaced their branches from shore to shore, so that at times the Spaniards were obliged to cut a passage with their swords.

At length they entered a great and turbulent river, which they ascended with difficulty, and early the next morning surprised a village on its banks, making the cacique Teoachan prisoner; who purchased their favour and kind treatment by a quantity of gold and pearls, and an abundant supply of provisions. As it was the intention of Vasco Nuñez to abandon the shores of the Southern Ocean at this place, and to strike across the mountains for Darien, he took leave of Chiapes and of the youthful son of Tumaco, who were to return to their houses in the canoes. He sent at the same time a message to his men, whom he had left in the village of Chiapes, appointing a place in the mountains where they were to rejoin him on his way back to Darien.

The talent of Vasco Nuñez for conciliating and winning the good-will of the savages is often mentioned, and to such a degree had he exerted it in the present instance, that the two

chieftains shed tears at parting. Their conduct had a favourable effect upon the cacique Teaochan; he entertained Vasco Nuñez with the most devoted hospitality during three days that he remained in his village; when about to depart he furnished him with a stock of provisions sufficient for several days, as his route would lay over rocky and sterile mountains. He sent also a numerous band of his subjects to carry the burthens of the Spaniards. These he placed under the command of his son, whom he ordered never to separate from the strangers, nor to permit any of his men to return without the consent of Vasco Nuñez.

CHAPTER XIII.

VASCO NUÑEZ SETS OUT ON HIS RETURN ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS —HIS CONTESTS WITH THE SAVAGES.

TURNING their backs upon the Southern Sea, the Spaniards now began painfully to clamber the rugged mountains on their return to Darien.

In the early part of their route an unlooked-for suffering awaited them: there was neither brook nor fountain nor standing pool. The burning heat, which produced intolerable thirst, had dried up all the mountain torrents, and they were tantalized by the sight of naked and dusty channels where water had once flowed in abundance. Their sufferings at length increased to such a height that many threw themselves fevered and panting upon the earth, and were ready to give up the ghost. The Indians, however, encouraged them to proceed, by hopes of speedy relief, and after a while, turning aside from the direct course, led them into a deep and narrow glen, refreshed and cooled by a fountain which bubbled out of a cleft of the rocks.

While refreshing themselves at the fountain, and reposing in the little valley, they learnt from their guides that they were in the territories of a powerful chief named Poncra, famous for his riches. The Spaniards had already heard of the golden stores of this Croesus of the mountains, and being now refreshed and invigorated, pressed forward with eagerness for his village.

The cacique and most of his people fled at their approach, but they found an earnest of his wealth in the deserted houses, amounting to the value of three thousand crowns in gold. Their avarice thus whetted, they despatched Indians in search of Poncra, who found him trembling in his secret retreat, and partly by threats, partly by promises, prevailed upon him and three of his principal subjects to come to Vasco Nuñez. He was a savage, it is said, so hateful of aspect, so misshapen in body and deformed in all his members, that he was hideous to behold. The Spaniards endeavoured by gentle means to draw from him information of the places from whence he had procured his gold. He professed utter ignorance in the matter, declaring that the gold found in his village had been gathered by his predecessors in times long past, and that as he himself set no value on the metal, he had never troubled himself to seek it. The Spaniards resorted to menaces, and even, it is said, to tortures, to compel him to betray his reputed treasures, but with no better success. Disappointed in their expectations, and enraged at his supposed obstinacy, they listened too readily to charges advanced against him by certain caciques of the neighbourhood, who represented him as a monster of cruelty, and as guilty of crimes repugnant to nature;* whereupon, in the heat of the moment, they gave him and his three companions, who were said to be equally guilty, to be torn in pieces by the dogs.—A rash and cruel sentence, given on the evidence of avowed enemies; and which, however it may be palliated by the alleged horror and disgust of the Spaniards at the imputed crimes of the cacique, bears too much the stamp of haste and passion, and remains a foul blot on the character of Vasco Nuñez.

The Spaniards remained for thirty days reposing in the village of the unfortunate Poncra, during which time they were rejoined by their companions, who had been left behind at the village of Chiapes. They were accompanied by a cacique of the mountains, who had lodged and fed them, and made them presents of the value of two thousand crowns in gold. This hospitable savage approached Vasco Nuñez with a serene countenance, and taking him by the hand, "Behold," said he, "most valiant and powerful chief, I bring thee thy companions safe and well, as they entered under my roof. May he who made the thunder and lightning, and who gives us the fruits

* P. Martyr, d. iii. c. 2.

of the earth, preserve thee and thine in safety!" So saying, he raised his eyes to the sun, as if he worshipped that as his deity and the dispenser of all temporal blessings.*

Departing from this village, and being still accompanied by the Indians of Teaochan, the Spaniards now bent their course along the banks of the river Comagre, which descends the northern side of the Isthmus, and flows through the territories of the cacique of the same name. This wild stream, which in the course of ages had worn a channel through the deep clefts and ravines of the mountains, was bordered by precipices, or overhung by shagged forests; they soon abandoned it, therefore, and wandered on without any path, but guided by the Indians. They had to climb terrible precipices, and to descend into deep valleys, darkened by thick forests and beset by treacherous morasses, where, but for their guides, they might have been smothered in the mire.

In the course of this rugged journey they suffered excessively in consequence of their own avarice. They had been warned of the sterility of the country they were about to traverse, and of the necessity of providing amply for the journey. When they came to lade the Indians, however, who bore their burdens, their only thought was how to convey the most treasure; and they grudged even a slender supply of provisions, as taking up the place of an equal weight of gold. The consequences were soon felt. The Indians could carry but small burthens, and at the same time assisted to consume the scanty stock of food which formed part of their load. Scarcity and famine ensued, and relief was rarely to be procured, for the villages on this elevated part of the mountains were scattered and poor, and nearly destitute of provisions. They held no communication with each other; each contenting itself with the scanty produce of its own fields and forest. Some were entirely deserted; at other places, the inhabitants, forced from their retreats, implored pardon, and declared they had hidden themselves through shame, not having the means of properly entertaining such celestial visitors. They brought peace-offerings of gold, but no provisions. For once the Spaniards found that even their darling gold could fail to cheer their drooping spirits. Their sufferings from hunger became intense, and many of their Indian companions sank down and perished by the way. At length they reached a village where they were enabled to

* Herrera, d. i. l. x. c. 4.

obtain supplies, and where they remained thirty days, to recruit their wasted strength.

CHAPTER XIV.

ENTERPRISE AGAINST TUBANAMA, THE WARLIKE CACIQUE OF THE MOUNTAINS—RETURN TO DARIEN.

THE Spaniards had now to pass through the territories of Tubanama, the most potent and warlike cacique of the mountains. This was the same chieftain of whom a formidable character had been given by the young Indian prince, who first informed Vasco Nuñez of the southern sea. He had erroneously represented the dominions of Tubanama as lying beyond the mountains; and, when he dwelt upon the quantities of gold to be found in them, had magnified the dangers that would attend any attempt to pass their borders. The name of this redoubtable cacique was, in fact, a terror throughout the country; and, when Vasco Nuñez looked round upon his handful of pale and emaciated followers, he doubted whether even the superiority of their weapons and their military skill would enable them to cope with Tubanama and his armies in open contest. He resolved, therefore, to venture upon a perilous stratagem. When he made it known to his men, every one pressed forward to engage in it. Choosing seventy of the most vigorous, he ordered the rest to maintain their post in the village.

As soon as night had fallen, he departed silently and secretly with his chosen band and made his way with such rapidity through the labyrinths of the forests and the defiles of the mountains that he arrived in the neighbourhood of the residence of Tubanama by the following evening, though at the distance of two regular days' journey.

There, waiting until midnight, he assailed the village suddenly and with success, so as to surprise and capture the cacique and his whole family, in which were eighty females. When Tubanama found himself a prisoner in the hands of the Spaniards, he lost all presence of mind and wept bitterly. The Indian allies of Vasco Nuñez, beholding their once-dreaded enemy thus fallen and captive, now urged that he should be

put to death, accusing him of various crimes and cruelties. Vasco Nuñez pretended to listen to their prayers, and gave orders that his captive should be tied hand and foot and given to the dogs. The cacique approached him trembling, and laid his hand upon the pommel of his sword. "Who can pretend," said he, "to strive with one who bears this weapon, which can cleave a man asunder with a blow? Ever since thy fame has reached among these mountains have I revered thy valour. Spare my life and thou shalt have all the gold I can procure."

Vasco Nuñez, whose anger was assumed, was readily pacified. As soon as the day dawned the cacique gave him armlets and other jewels of gold to the value of three thousand crowns, and sent messengers throughout his dominions ordering his subjects to aid in paying his ransom. The poor Indians, with their accustomed loyalty, hastened in crowds, bringing their golden ornaments, until, in the course of three days, they had produced an amount equal to six thousand crowns. This done, Vasco Nuñez set the cacique at liberty, bestowing on him several European trinkets, with which he considered himself richer than he had been with all his gold. Nothing would draw from him, however, the disclosure of the mines from whence this treasure was procured. He declared that it came from the territories of his neighbours, where gold and pearls were to be found in abundance; but that his lands produced nothing of the kind. Vasco Nuñez doubted his sincerity, and secretly caused the brooks and rivers in his dominions to be searched, where gold was found in such quantities, that he determined at a future time to found two settlements in the neighbourhood.

On parting with Tubanama, the cacique sent his son with the Spaniards to learn their language and religion. It is said, also, that the Spaniards carried off his eighty women; but of this particular fact, Oviedo, who writes with the papers of Vasco Nuñez before him, says nothing. He affirms generally, however, that the Spaniards, throughout this expedition, were not scrupulous in their dealings with the wives and daughters of the Indians; and adds that in this their commander set them the example.*

Having returned to the village, where he had left the greater part of his men, Vasco Nuñez resumed his homeward march. His people were feeble and exhausted and several of them sick, so that some had to be carried and others led by the arms. He

* Oviedo, *Hist. Gen.* Part II. c. 4, MS.

himself was part of the time afflicted by a fever, and had to be borne in a hammock on the shoulders of the Indians.

Proceeding thus slowly and toilsomely, they at length arrived on the northern sea-coast, at the territories of their ally, Comagre. The old cacique was dead and had been succeeded by his son, the same intelligent youth who had first given information of the southern sea and the kingdom of Peru. The young chief, who had embraced Christianity, received them with great hospitality, making them presents of gold. Vasco Nuñez gave him trinkets in return and a shirt and a soldier's cloak; with which, says Peter Martyr, he thought himself half a god among his naked countrymen. After having reposed for a few days, Vasco Nuñez proceeded to Ponca, where he heard that a ship and caravel had arrived at Darien from Hispaniola with reinforcements and supplies. Hastening, therefore, to Coyba, the territories of his ally, Careta, he embarked on the 18th of January, 1514, with twenty of his men, in the brigantine which he had left there, and arrived at Santa Maria de la Antigua in the river of Darien on the following day. All the inhabitants came forth to receive him; and, when they heard the news of the great southern sea, and of his returning from its shores laden with pearls and gold, there were no bounds to their joy. He immediately despatched the ship and caravel to Coyba for the companions he had left behind, who brought with them the remaining booty, consisting of gold and pearls, mantles, hammocks, and other articles of cotton, and a great number of captives of both sexes. A fifth of the spoil was set apart for the crown; the rest was shared, in just proportions, among those who had been in the expedition and those who had remained at Darien. All were contented with their allotment, and elated with the prospect of still greater gain from future enterprises.

Thus ended one of the most remarkable expeditions of the early discoverers. The intrepidity of Vasco Nuñez in penetrating with a handful of men far into the interior of a wild and mountainous country, peopled by warlike tribes: his skill in managing his band of rough adventurers, stimulating their valour, enforcing their obedience, and attaching their affections, show him to have possessed great qualities as a general. We are told that he was always foremost in peril and the last to quit the field. He shared the toils and dangers of the meanest of his followers, treating them with frank affability; watching, fighting, fasting, and labouring with them; visiting and

consoling such as were sick or infirm, and dividing all his gains with fairness and liberality. He was chargeable at times with acts of bloodshed and injustice, but it is probable that these were often called for as measures of safety and precaution; he certainly offended less against humanity than most of the early discoverers; and the unbounded amity and confidence reposed in him by the natives, when they became intimately acquainted with his character, speak strongly in favour of his kind treatment of them.

The character of Vasco Nuñez had, in fact, risen with his circumstances, and now assumed a nobleness and grandeur from the discovery he had made, and the important charge it had devolved upon him. He no longer felt himself a mere soldier of fortune, at the head of a band of adventurers, but a great commander conducting an immortal enterprise. "Behold," says old Peter Martyr, "Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, at once transformed from a rash royster to a politic and discreet captain:" and thus it is that men are often made by their fortunes; that is to say, their latent qualities are brought out, and shaped and strengthened by events, and by the necessity of every exertion to cope with the greatness of their destiny.

CHAPTER XV.

TRANSACTIONS IN SPAIN—PEDRARIAS DAVILA APPOINTED TO THE
COMMAND OF DARIEN—TIDINGS RECEIVED IN SPAIN OF THE
DISCOVERY OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

VASCO NUÑEZ de Balboa now flattered himself that he had made a discovery calculated to silence all his enemies at court, and to elevate him to the highest favour with his sovereign. He wrote letters to the king, giving a detail of his expedition, and setting forth all that he had seen or heard of this Southern Sea, and of the rich countries upon its borders. Beside the royal fifths of the profits of the expedition, he prepared a present for the sovereign, in the name of himself and his companions, consisting of the largest and most precious pearls they had collected. As a trusty and intelligent envoy to bear these tidings, he chose Pedro de Arbolancha, an old and tried friend, who had accompanied him in his toils and dangers, and was well acquainted with all his transactions.

The fate of Vasco Nuñez furnishes a striking instance how prosperity and adversity, how even life and death hang balanced upon a point of time, and are affected by the improvement or neglect of moments. Unfortunately, the ship which was to convey the messenger to Spain lingered in port until the beginning of March; a delay which had a fatal influence on the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez. It is necessary here to cast an eye back upon the events which had taken place in Spain while he was employed in his conquests and discoveries.

The Bachelor Enciso had arrived in Castile full of his wrongs and indignities. He had friends at court, who aided him in gaining a ready hearing, and he lost not a moment in availing himself of it. He declaimed eloquently upon the alleged usurpation of Vasco Nuñez, and represented him as governing the colony by force and fraud. It was in vain that the Alcalde Zamudio, the ancient colleague and the envoy of Vasco Nuñez, attempted to speak in his defence; he was unable to cope with the facts and arguments of the Bachelor, who was a pleader by profession, and now pleaded his own cause. The king determined to send a new governor to Darien with power to inquire into and remedy all abuses. For this office he chose Don Pedro Arias Davila, commonly called Pedrarias.* He was a native of Segovia, who had been brought up in the royal household, and had distinguished himself as a brave soldier, both in the war in Granada and at the taking of Oran and Bugia in Africa. He possessed those personal accomplishments which captivate the soldiery, and was called *el Galan*, for his gallant array and courtly demeanour, and *el Justador*, or *the Tilter*, for his dexterity in jousts and tournaments. These, it must be admitted, were not the qualifications most adapted for the government of rude and factious colonies in a wilderness; but he had an all-powerful friend in the Bishop Fonseca. The Bishop was as thoroughgoing in patronage as in persecution. He assured the king that Pedrarias had understanding equal to his valour; that he was as capable of managing the affairs of peace as of war, and that, having been brought up in the royal household, his loyalty might be implicitly relied on.

Scarcely had Don Pedrarias been appointed, when Cayzedo and Colmenares arrived on their mission from Darien, to communicate the intelligence received from the son of the

* By the English historians he has generally been called Davila.

cacique Comagre, of the Southern Sea beyond the mountains, and to ask one thousand men to enable Vasco Nuñez to make the discovery.

The avarice and ambition of Ferdinand were inflamed by the tidings. He rewarded the bearers of the intelligence, and, after consulting with Bishop Fonseca, resolved to despatch immediately a powerful armada, with twelve hundred men, under the command of Pedrarias, to accomplish the enterprise.

Just about this time the famous Gonsalvo Hernandez de Cordova, commonly called the Great Captain, was preparing to return to Naples, where the allies of Spain had experienced a signal defeat, and had craved the assistance of this renowned general to retrieve their fortunes. The chivalry of Spain thronged to enlist under the banner of Gonsalvo. The Spanish nobles, with their accustomed prodigality, sold or mortgaged their estates to buy gorgeous armour, silks, brocades, and other articles of martial pomp and luxury, that they might figure, with becoming magnificence, in the campaigns of Italy. The armament was on the point of sailing for Naples with this host of proud and gallant spirits, when the jealous mind of Ferdinand took offence at the enthusiasm thus shown towards his general, and he abruptly countermanded the expedition. The Spanish cavaliers were overwhelmed with disappointment at having their dreams of glory thus suddenly dispelled; when, as if to console them, the enterprise of Pedrarias was set on foot, and opened a different career of adventure. The very idea of an unknown sea and splendid empire, where never European ship had sailed or foot had trodden, broke upon the imagination with the vague wonders of an Arabian tale. Even the countries already known, in the vicinity of the settlement of Darien, were described in the usual terms of exaggeration. Gold was said to lie on the surface of the ground, or to be gathered with nets out of the brooks and rivers; insomuch that the region hitherto called Terra Firma now received the pompous and delusive appellation of Castilla del Oro, or Golden Castile.

Excited by these reports, many of the youthful cavaliers, who had prepared for the Italian campaign, now offered themselves as volunteers to Don Pedrarias. He accepted their services, and appointed Seville as the place of assemblage. The streets of that ancient city soon swarmed with young and noble cavaliers splendidly arrayed, full of spirits, and eager for the sailing of the Indian armada. Pedrarias,

on his arrival at Seville, made a general review of his forces, and was embarrassed to find that the number amounted to three thousand. He had been limited in his first armament to twelve hundred; on representing the nature of the case, however, the number was extended to fifteen hundred; but through influence, entreaty, and stratagem, upwards of two thousand eventually embarked.* Happy did he think himself who could in any manner, and by any means, get admitted on board of the squadron. Nor was this eagerness for the enterprise confined merely to young and buoyant and ambitious adventurers; we are told that there were many covetous old men, who offered to go at their own expense, without seeking any pay from the king. Thus every eye was turned with desire to this squadron of modern Argonauts, as it lay anchored on the bosom of the Guadalquiver.

The pay and appointments of Don Pedrarias Davila were on the most liberal scale, and no expense was spared in fitting out the armament; for the objects of the expedition were both colonization and conquest. Artillery and powder were procured from Malaga. Beside the usual weapons, such as muskets, cross-bows, swords, pikes, lances, and Neapolitan targets, there was armour devised of quilted cotton, as being light and better adapted to the climate, and sufficiently proof against the weapons of the Indians; and wooden bucklers from the Canary Islands, to ward off the poisoned arrows of the Caribs.

Santa Maria de la Antigua was, by royal ordinance, elevated into the metropolitan city of Golden Castile, and a Franciscan friar, named Juan de Quevedo, was appointed as bishop, with powers to decide in all cases of conscience. A number of friars were nominated to accompany him, and he was provided with the necessary furniture and vessels for a chapel.

Among the various regulations made for the good of the infant colony, it was ordained that no lawyers should be admitted there, it having been found at Hispaniola and elsewhere, that they were detrimental to the welfare of the settlements, by fomenting disputes and litigations. The judicial affairs were to be entirely confided to the Licentiate Gaspar de Espinosa, who was to officiate as Alcalde Mayor or chief judge.

* Oviedo, l. ii., c. 7, MS.

Don Pedrarias had intended to leave his wife in Spain. Her name was Doña Isabella de Bobadilla; she was niece to the Marchioness de Moya, a great favourite of the late Queen Isabella, who had been instrumental in persuading her royal mistress to patronize Columbus.* Her niece partook of her high and generous nature. She refused to remain behind in selfish security, but declared that she would accompany her husband in every peril, whether by sea or land. This self-devotion is the more remarkable when it is considered that she was past the romantic period of youth; and that she had a family of four sons and four daughters, whom she left behind her in Spain.

Don Pedrarias was instructed to use great indulgence towards the people of Darien, who had been the followers of Nicuesa, and to remit the royal tithe of all the gold they might have collected previous to his arrival. Towards Vasco Nuñez de Balboa alone the royal countenance was stern and severe. Pedrarias was to depose him from his assumed authority, and to call him to strict account before the Alcalde Mayor, Gaspar de Espinosa, for his treatment of the Bachelor Enciso.

The splendid fleet, consisting of fifteen sail, weighed anchor at St. Lucar on the 12th of April, 1514, and swept proudly out of the Guadalquivir, thronged with the chivalrous adventurers for Golden Castile. But a short time had elapsed after its departure, when Pedro Arbolancho arrived with the tardy missions of Vasco Nuñez. Had he arrived a few days sooner, how different might have been the fortunes of his friend!

He was immediately admitted to the royal presence, where he announced the adventurous and successful expedition of Vasco Nuñez, and laid before the king the pearls and golden ornaments which he had brought as the first fruits of the discovery. King Ferdinand listened with charmed attention to this tale of unknown seas and wealthy realms added to his empire. It filled, in fact, the imaginations of the most sage and learned with golden dreams, and anticipations of unbounded riches. Old Peter Martyr, who received letters from his friends in Darien, and communicated by word of mouth with those who came from thence, writes to Leo the Tenth in exulting terms of this event. "Spain," says he,

* This was the same Marchioness de Moya, who during the war of Granada, while the court and royal army were encamped before Malaga, was mistaken for the queen by a Moorish fanatic, and had nearly fallen beneath his dagger.

"will hereafter be able to satisfy with pearls the greedy appetite of such as in wanton pleasures are like unto Cleopatra and Æsopus; so that henceforth we shall neither envy nor reverence the nice fruitfulness of Trapoban or the Red Sea. The Spaniards will not need hereafter to mine and dig far into the earth, nor to cut asunder mountains in quest of gold, but will find it plentifully, in a manner, on the upper crust of the earth, or in the sands of rivers dried up by the heats of summer. Certainly the reverend antiquity obtained not so great a benefit of nature, nor even aspired to the knowledge thereof, since never man before, from the known world, penetrated to these unknown regions." *

The tidings of this discovery at once made all Spain resound with the praises of Vasco Nuñez; and from being considered a lawless and desperate adventurer, he was lauded to the skies as a worthy successor to Columbus. The king repented of the harshness of his late measures towards him, and ordered the Bishop Fonseca to devise some mode of rewarding his transcendent services.

CHAPTER XVI.

ARRIVAL AND GRAND ENTRY OF DON PEDRARIAS DAVILA INTO DARIEN.

WHILE honours and rewards were preparing in Europe for Vasco Nuñez, that indefatigable commander, inspired by his fortunes, with redoubled zeal and loftier ambition, was exercising the paternal forethought and discretion of a patriotic governor over the country subjected to his rule. His most strenuous exertions were directed to bring the neighbourhood of Darien into such a state of cultivation as might render the settlement independent of Europe for supplies. The town was situated on the banks of a river, and contained upwards of two hundred houses and cabins. Its population amounted to five hundred and fifteen Europeans, all men, and fifteen hundred Indians, male and female. Orchards and gardens had been laid out, where European as well as native fruits and vegetables were cultivated, and already gave promise of future

* P. Martyr, decad. 3, chap. iii. Lok's translation.

abundance. Vasco Nuñez devised all kinds of means to keep up the spirits of his people. On holidays they had their favourite national sports and games, and particularly tilting matches, of which chivalrous amusement the Spaniards in those days were extravagantly fond. Sometimes he gratified their restless and roving habits by sending them on expeditions to various parts of the country, to acquire a knowledge of its resources, and to strengthen his sway over the natives. He was so successful in securing the amity or exciting the awe of the Indian tribes, that a Spaniard might go singly about the land in perfect safety; while his own followers were zealous in their devotion to him, both from admiration of his past exploits and from hopes of soon being led by him to new discoveries and conquests. Peter Martyr, in his letter to Leo the Tenth, speaks in high terms of these "old soldiers of Darien," the remnants of those well-tried adventurers who had followed the fortunes of Ojeda, Nicuesa, and Vasco Nuñez. "They were hardened," says he, "to abide all sorrows, and were exceedingly tolerant of labour, heat, hunger, and watching, insomuch that they merrily make their boast that they have observed a longer and sharper Lent than ever your Holiness enjoined, since, for the space of four years, their food has been herbs and fruits, with now and then fish, and very seldom flesh."*

Such were the hardy and well-seasoned veterans that were under the sway of Vasco Nuñez; and the colony gave signs of rising in prosperity under his active and fostering management, when in the month of June the fleet of Don Pedrarias Davila arrived in the Gulf of Uraba.

The Spanish cavaliers who accompanied the new governor were eager to get on shore, and to behold the anticipated wonders of the land; but Pedrarias, knowing the resolute character of Vasco Nuñez, and the devotion of his followers, apprehended some difficulty in getting possession of the colony. Anchoring, therefore, about a league and a half from the settlement, he sent a messenger on shore to announce his arrival. The envoy, having heard so much in Spain of the prowess and exploits of Vasco Nuñez and the riches of Golden Castile, expected, no doubt, to find a blustering warrior, maintaining barbaric state in the government which he had usurped. Great was his astonishment, therefore, to find this redoubta-

* P. Martyr, deced. 3, c. iiii. Lok's translation.

ble hero a plain, unassuming man, clad in a cotton frock and drawers, and hempen sandals, directing and aiding the labour of several Indians who were thatching a cottage in which he resided.

The messenger approached him respectfully, and announced the arrival of Don Pedrarias Davila as governor of the country.

Whatever Vasco Nuñez may have felt at this intelligence, he suppressed his emotions, and answered the messenger with great discretion: "Tell Don Pedrarias Davila," said he, "that he is welcome, that I congratulate him on his safe arrival, and am ready, with all who are here, to obey his orders."

The little community of rough and daring adventurers was immediately in an uproar when they found a new governor had arrived. Some of the most zealous adherents of Vasco Nuñez were disposed to sally forth, sword in hand, and repel the intruder; but they were restrained by their more considerate chieftain, who prepared to receive the new governor with all due submission.

Pedrarias disembarked on the thirtieth of June, accompanied by his heroic wife, Doña Isabella; who, according to old Peter Martyr, had sustained the roarings and rages of the ocean with no less stout courage than either her husband or even the mariners who had been brought up among the surges of the sea.

Pedrarias set out for the embryo city at the head of two thousand men, all well armed. He led his wife by the hand, and on the other side of him was the bishop of Darien in his robes; while a brilliant train of youthful cavaliers, in glittering armour and brocade, formed a kind of body-guard.

All this pomp and splendour formed a striking contrast with the humble state of Vasco Nuñez, who came forth unarmed, in simple attire, accompanied by his councillors and a handful of the "old soldiers of Darien," scarred and battered, and grown half wild in Indian warfare, but without weapons, and in garments much the worse for wear.

Vasco Nuñez saluted Don Pedrarias Davila with profound reverence, and promised him implicit obedience, both in his own name and in the name of the community. Having entered the town, he conducted his distinguished guests to his straw-thatched habitation, where he had caused a repast to be prepared of such cheer as his means afforded, consisting of roots and fruits, maize and casava bread, with no other beverage than water from the river; a sorry palace and a meagre

banquet in the eyes of the gay cavaliers, who had anticipated far other things from the usurper of Golden Castile. Vasco Nuñez, however, acquitted himself in his humble wigwam with the courtesy and hospitality of a prince, and showed that the dignity of an entertainment depends more upon the giver than the feast. In the meantime a plentiful supply of European provisions was landed from the fleet, and a temporary abundance was diffused through the colony.

CHAPTER XVII.

PERFIDIOUS CONDUCT OF DON PEDRARIAS TOWARDS VASCO NUÑEZ.

ON the day after his entrance into Darien, Don Pedrarias held a private conference with Vasco Nuñez in presence of the historian Oviedo, who had come out from Spain as the public notary of the colony. The governor commenced by assuring him that he was instructed by the king to treat him with great favour and distinction, to consult him about the affairs of the colony, and to apply to him for information relative to the surrounding country. At the same time he professed the most amicable feelings on his own part, and an intention to be guided by his counsels in all public measures.

Vasco Nuñez was of a frank, confiding nature, and was so captivated by this unexpected courtesy and kindness, that he threw off all caution and reserve, and opened his whole soul to the politic courtier. Pedrarias availed himself of this communicative mood to draw from him a minute and able statement in writing, detailing the circumstances of the colony, and the information collected respecting various parts of the country; the route by which he had traversed the mountains; his discovery of the South Sea; the situation and reputed wealth of the Pearl Islands; the rivers and ravines most productive of gold; together with the names and territories of the various caciques with whom he had made treaties.

When Pedrarias had thus beguiled the unsuspecting soldier of all the information necessary for his purposes, he dropped the mask, and within a few days proclaimed a judicial scrutiny into the conduct of Vasco Nuñez and his officers. It was to

be conducted by the Licentiate Gaspar de Espinosa, who had come out as Alcalde Mayor, or chief judge. The Licentiate was an inexperienced lawyer, having but recently left the university of Salamanca. He appears to have been somewhat flexible in his opinions, and prone to be guided or governed by others. At the outset of his career he was much under the influence of Quevedo, the Bishop of Darien. Now, as Vasco Nuñez knew the importance of this prelate in the colony, he had taken care to secure him to his interests by paying him the most profound deference and respect, and by giving him a share in his agricultural enterprises and his schemes of traffic. In fact, the good bishop looked upon him as one eminently calculated to promote his temporal prosperity, to which he was by no means insensible. Under the influence of the prelate, therefore, the Alcalde commenced his investigation in the most favourable manner. He went largely into an examination of the discoveries of Vasco Nuñez, and of the nature and extent of his various services. The governor was alarmed at the course which the inquiry was taking. If thus conducted, it would but serve to illustrate the merits and elevate the reputation of the man whom it was his interest and intent to ruin. To counteract it he immediately set on foot a secret and invidious course of interrogatories of the followers of Nicuesa and Ojeda, to draw from them testimony which might support the charge against Vasco Nuñez of usurpation and tyrannical abuse of power. The bishop and the Alcalde received information of this inquisition, carried on thus secretly, and without their sanction. They remonstrated warmly against it, as an infringement of their rights, being coadjutors in the government; and they spurned the testimony of the followers of Ojeda and Nicuesa, as being dictated and discoloured by ancient enmity. Vasco Nuñez was, therefore, acquitted by them of the criminal charges made against him, though he remained involved in difficulties from the suits brought against him by individuals, for losses and damages occasioned by his measures.

Pedrarias was incensed at this acquittal, and insisted upon the guilt of Vasco Nuñez, which he pretended to have established to his conviction by his secret investigations; and he even determined to send him in chains to Spain, to be tried for the death of Nicuesa, and for other imputed offences.

It was not the inclination or the interest of the bishop that Vasco Nuñez should leave the colony; he therefore managed to awaken the jealous apprehensions of the governor as to the

effect of his proposed measure. He intimated that the arrival of Vasco Nuñez in Spain would be signalized by triumph rather than disgrace. By that time his grand discoveries would be blazoned to the world, and would atone for all his faults. He would be received with enthusiasm by the nation, with favour by the king, and would probably be sent back to the colony clothed with new dignity and power.

Pedrarias was placed in a perplexing dilemma by these suggestions; his violent proceedings against Vasco Nuñez were also in some measure restrained by the influence of his wife, Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, who felt a great respect and sympathy for the discoverer. In his perplexity, the wily governor adopted a middle course. He resolved to detain Vasco Nuñez at Darien under a cloud of imputation, which would gradually impair his popularity; while his patience and means would be silently consumed by protracted and expensive litigation. In the mean time, however, the property which had been sequestered was restored to him.

While Pedrarias treated Vasco Nuñez with this severity, he failed not to avail himself of the plans of that able commander. The first of these was to establish a line of posts across the mountains between Darien and the South Sea. It was his eager desire to execute this before any order should arrive from the king in favour of his predecessor, in order that he might have the credit of having colonized the coast, and Vasco Nuñez merely that of having discovered and visited it.* Before he could complete these arrangements, however, unlooked-for calamities fell upon the settlement, that for a time interrupted every project, and made every one turn his thoughts merely to his own security.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CALAMITIES OF THE SPANISH CAVALIERS AT DARIEN.

THE town of Darien was situated in a deep valley surrounded by lofty hills, which, while they kept off the breezes so grateful in a sultry climate, reflected and concentrated the rays of the sun, insomuch that at noontide the heat was insupportable;

* Oviedo, *Hist. Ind.*, p. 2, c. 8.

the river which passed it was shallow, with a muddy channel and bordered by marshes; overhanging forests added to the general humidity, and the very soil on which the town was built was of such a nature, that on digging to the depth of a foot there would ooze forth brackish water.*

It is not matter of surprise that a situation of this kind, in a tropical climate, should be fatal to the health of Europeans. Many of those who had recently arrived were swept off speedily; Pedrarias himself fell sick and was removed, with most of his people, to a healthier spot on the river Corobari; the malady, however, continued to increase. The provisions which had been brought out in the ships had been partly damaged by the sea, the residue grew scanty, and the people were put upon short allowance; the debility thus produced increased the ravages of the disease; at length the provisions were exhausted and the horrors of absolute famine ensued.

Every one was more or less affected by these calamities; even the veterans of the colony quailed beneath them; but to none were they more fatal than to the crowd of youthful cavaliers who had once glittered so gaily about the streets of Seville, and had come out to the new world elated with the most sanguine expectations. From the very moment of their landing they had been disheartened at the savage scenes around them, and disgusted with the squalid life they were doomed to lead. They shrunk with disdain from the labours with which alone wealth was to be procured in this land of gold and pearls, and were impatient of the humble exertions necessary for the maintenance of existence. As the famine increased, their case became desperate; for they were unable to help themselves, and their rank and dignity commanded neither deference nor aid at a time when common misery made every one selfish. Many of them, who had mortgaged estates in Spain to fit themselves out sumptuously for their Italian campaign, now perished for lack of food. Some would be seen bartering a robe of crimson silk, or some garment of rich brocade, for a pound of Indian bread or European biscuit; others sought to satisfy the cravings of hunger with the herbs and roots of the field, and one of the principal cavaliers absolutely expired of hunger in the public streets.

In this wretched way, and in the short space of one month, perished seven hundred of the little army of youthful and

* P. Martyr, decad. 3, c. vi.

buoyant spirits who had embarked with Pedrarias. The bodies of some remained for a day or two without sepulture, their friends not having sufficient strength to bury them. Unable to remedy the evil, Pedrarias gave permission for his men to flee from it. A ship-load of starving adventurers departed for Cuba, where some of them joined the standard of Diego Velasquez, who was colonizing that island; others made their way back to Spain, where they arrived broken in health, in spirits, and in fortune.

CHAPTER XIX.

FRUITLESS EXPEDITION OF PEDRARIAS.

THE departure of so many hungry mouths was some temporary relief to the colony; and Pedrarias, having recovered from his malady, bestirred himself to send expeditions in various directions for the purpose of foraging the country and collecting the treasure.

These expeditions, however, were entrusted to his own favourites and partisans; while Vasco Nuñez, the man most competent to carry them into effect, remained idle and neglected. A judicial inquiry, tardily carried on, overshadowed him, and though it substantiated nothing, served to embarrass his actions, to cool his friends, and to give him the air of a public delinquent. Indeed, to the other evils of the colony was now added that of excessive litigation, arising out of the disputes concerning the government of Vasco Nuñez, and which increased to such a degree, that according to the report of the Alcalde Espinosa, if the law-suits should be divided among the people, at least forty would fall to each man's share.* This too was in a colony into which the government had commanded that no lawyer should be admitted.

Wearied and irritated by the check which had been given to his favourite enterprises, and confident of the ultimate approbation of the king, Vasco Nuñez now determined to take his fortunes in his own hands, and to prosecute in secret his grand project of exploring the regions beyond the mountains. For

* Herrera, decad. 2, l. i. c. l.

this purpose he privately despatched one Andres Garabito to Cuba to enlist men, and to make the requisite provisions for an expedition across the isthmus, from Nombre de Dios, and for the founding a colony on the shores of the Southern Ocean, from whence he proposed to extend his discoveries by sea and land.

While Vasco Nuñez awaited the return of Garabito, he had the mortification of beholding various of his colonizing plans pursued and marred by Pedrarias. Among other enterprises, the governor despatched his lieutenant-general, Juan de Ayora, at the head of four hundred men, to visit the provinces of those caciques with whom Vasco Nuñez had sojourned and made treaties on his expedition to the Southern Sea. Ayora partook of the rash and domineering spirit of Pedrarias, and harassed and devastated the countries which he pretended to explore. He was received with amity and confidence by various caciques who had formed treaties with Vasco Nuñez; but he repaid their hospitality with the basest ingratitude, seizing upon their property, taking from them their wives and daughters, and often torturing them to make them reveal their hidden or supposed treasures. Among those treated with this perfidy, we grieve to enumerate the youthful cacique who first gave Vasco Nuñez information of the sea beyond the mountains.

The enormities of Ayora and of other captains of Pedrarias produced the usual effect; the natives were roused to desperate resistance; caciques who had been faithful friends, were converted into furious enemies, and the expedition ended in disappointment and disaster.

The adherents of Vasco Nuñez did not fail to contrast these disastrous enterprises with those which had been conducted with so much glory and advantage by their favourite commander; and their sneers and reproaches had such an effect upon the jealous and irritable disposition of Pedrarias, that he determined to employ their idol in a service that would be likely to be attended with defeat and to impair his popularity. None seemed more fitting for the purpose than an expedition to Dokayba, where he had once already attempted in vain to penetrate, and where so many of his followers had fallen victims to the stratagems and assaults of the natives.

CHAPTER XX.

SECOND EXPEDITION OF VASCO NUÑEZ IN QUEST OF THE GOLD
TEMPLE OF DOBAYBA.

THE rich mines of Dobayba and the treasures of its golden temple had continued to form a favourite theme with the Spanish adventurers. It was ascertained that Vasco Nuñez had stopped short of the wealthy region on his former expedition, and had mistaken a frontier village for the residence of the cacique. The enterprise of the temple was therefore still to be achieved; and it was solicited by several of the cavaliers in the train of Pedrarias with all the chivalrous ardour of that romantic age. Indeed, common report had invested the enterprise with difficulties and danger sufficient to stimulate the ambition of the keenest seeker of adventure. The savages who inhabited that part of the country were courageous and adroit. They fought by water as well as by land, forming ambuscades with their canoes in the bays and rivers. The country was intersected by dreary fens and morasses, infested by all kinds of reptiles. Clouds of gnats and mosquitoes filled the air; there were large bats also, supposed to have the baneful properties of the vampire; alligators lurked in the waters, and the gloomy recesses of the fens were said to be the dens of dragons!*

Besides these objects of terror, both true and fabulous, the old historian, Peter Martyr, makes mention of another monstrous animal said to infest this golden region, and which deserves to be cited, as showing the imaginary dangers with which the active minds of the discoverers peopled the unexplored wilderness around them.

According to the tales of the Indians, there had occurred shortly before the arrival of the Spaniards a violent tempest, or rather hurricane, in the neighbourhood of Dobayba, which demolished houses, tore up trees by the roots, and laid waste whole forests. When the tempest had subsided, and the affrighted inhabitants ventured to look abroad, they found that two monstrous animals had been brought into the country by the hurricane. According to their accounts, they were not

* P. Martyr.

unlike the ancient harpies, and one being smaller than the other was supposed to be its young. They had the faces of women, with the claws and wings of eagles, and were of such prodigious size that the very boughs of the trees on which they alighted broke beneath them. They would swoop down and carry off a man as a hawk would bear off a chicken, flying with him to the tops of the mountains, where they would tear him in pieces and devour him. For some time they were the scourge and terror of the land, until the Indians succeeded in killing the old one by stratagem, and hanging her on their long spears, bore her through all the towns to assuage the alarm of the inhabitants. The younger harpy, says the Indian tradition, was never seen afterwards.*

Such were some of the perils, true and fabulous, with which the land of Dobayba was said to abound; and, in fact, the very Indians had such a dread of its dark and dismal morasses, that in their journeyings they carefully avoided them, preferring the circuitous and rugged paths of the mountains.

Several of the youthful cavaliers, as has been observed, were stimulated, rather than deterred, by these dangers, and contended for the honour of the expedition; but Pedrarias selected his rival for the task, hoping, as has been hinted, that it would involve him in disgrace. Vasco Nuñez promptly accepted the enterprise, for his pride was concerned in its success. Two hundred resolute men were given to him for the purpose; but his satisfaction was diminished when he found that Luis Carrillo, an officer of Pedrarias, who had failed in a perilous enterprise, was associated with him in the command.

Few particulars remain to us of the events of this affair. They embarked in a fleet of canoes, and, traversing the gulf, arrived at the river which flowed down from the region of Dobayba. They were not destined, however, to achieve the enterprise of the golden temple. As they were proceeding rather confidently and unguardedly up the river, they were suddenly surprised and surrounded by an immense swarm of canoes, filled with armed savages, which darted out from lurking places along the shores. Some of the Indians assailed them with lances, others with clouds of arrows, while some, plunging into the water, endeavoured to overturn their canoes. In this way one-half of the Spaniards were killed or drowned. Among the number fell Luis Carrillo, pierced through the

* P. Martyr, decad. 7, c. 10.

breast by an Indian lance. Vasco Nuñez himself was wounded, and had great difficulty in escaping to the shore with the residue of his forces.

The Indians pursued him and kept up a skirmishing attack, but he beat them off until the night, when he silently abandoned the shore of the river, and directed his retreat towards Darien. It is easier to imagine than to describe the toils and dangers and horrors which beset him and the remnant of his men, as they traversed rugged mountains or struggled through these fearful morasses, of which they had heard such terrific tales. At length they succeeded in reaching the settlement of Darien.

The partisans of Pedrarias exulted in seeing Vasco Nuñez returned thus foiled and wounded, and taunted his adherents with their previous boastings. The latter, however, laid all the blame upon the unfortunate Carrillo. "Vasco Nuñez," said they, "had always absolute command in his former enterprises, but in this he has been embarrassed by an associate. Had the expedition been confided to him alone, the event had been far different."

CHAPTER XXI.

LETTERS FROM THE KING IN FAVOUR OF VASCO NUÑEZ—ARRIVAL OF GARABITO—ARREST OF VASCO NUÑEZ.—(1515.)

ABOUT this time despatches arrived from Spain that promised to give a new turn to the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez and to the general affairs of the colony. They were written after the tidings of the discovery of the South Sea, and the subjugation of so many important provinces of the Isthmus. In a letter addressed to Vasco Nuñez, the king expressed his high sense of his merits and services, and constituted him Adelantado of the South Sea, and Governor of the provinces of Panama and Coyba, though subordinate to the general command of Pedrarias. A letter was likewise written by the king to Pedrarias, informing him of this appointment, and ordering him to consult Vasco Nuñez on all public affairs of importance. This was a humiliating blow to the pride and consequence of Pedrarias, but he hoped to parry it. In the mean time, as all letters from Spain were first delivered into his hands, he with-

held that intended for Vasco Nuñez, until he should determine what course of conduct to adopt. The latter, however, heard of the circumstance, as did his friend the Bishop of Darien. The prelate made loud complaints of this interruption of the royal correspondence, which he denounced, even from the pulpit, as an outrage upon the rights of the subject, and an act of disobedience to the sovereign.

Upon this the governor called a council of his public officers; and, after imparting the contents of his letter, requested their opinion as to the propriety of investing Vasco Nuñez with the dignities thus granted to him. The Alcalde Mayor, Espinosa, had left the party of the bishop, and was now devoted to the governor. He insisted, vehemently, that the offices ought in no wise to be given to Vasco Nuñez, until the king should be informed of the result of the inquest which was still going on against him. In this he was warmly supported by the treasurer and the accountant. The bishop replied, indignantly, that it was presumptuous and disloyal in them to dispute the commands of the king, and to interfere with the rewards conscientiously given by him to a meritorious subject. In this way, he added, they were defeating, by their passions, the grateful intentions of their sovereign. The governor was overawed by the honest warmth of the bishop, and professed to accord with him in opinion. The council lasted until midnight; and it was finally agreed that the titles and dignities should be conferred on Vasco Nuñez on the following day.*

Pedrarias and his officers reflected, however, that if the jurisdiction implied by these titles were absolutely vested in Vasco Nuñez, the government of Darien and Castilla del Oro would virtually be reduced to a trifling matter; they resolved, therefore, to adopt a middle course; to grant him the empty titles, but to make him give security not to enter upon the actual government of the territories in question, until Pedrarias should give him permission. The bishop and Vasco Nuñez assented to this arrangement; satisfied, for the present, with securing the titles, and trusting to the course of events to get dominion over the territories.†

* Oviedo, part 2, c. 9, MS. Oviedo, the historian, was present at this consultation, and says that he wrote down the opinions given on the occasion, which the parties signed with their proper hands.

† Oviedo, part 2, c. 9, MS.

The new honours of Vasco Nuñez were now promulgated to the world, and he was every where addressed by the title of Adelantado. His old friends lifted up their heads with exultation, and new adherents flocked to his standard. Parties began to form for him and for Pedrarias, for it was deemed impossible they could continue long in harmony.

The jealousy of the governor was excited by these circumstances; and he regarded the newly created Adelantado as a dangerous rival and an insidious foe. Just at this critical juncture, Andres Garabito, the agent of Vasco Nuñez, arrived on the coast in a vessel which he had procured at Cuba, and had freighted with arms and ammunition, and seventy resolute men, for the secret expedition to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. He anchored six leagues from the harbour, and sent word privately to Vasco Nuñez of his arrival.

Information was immediately carried to Pedrarias, that a mysterious vessel, full of armed men, was hovering on the coast, and holding secret communication with his rival. The suspicious temper of the governor immediately took the alarm. He fancied some treasonable plot against his authority; his passions mingled with his fears; and, in the first burst of his fury, he ordered that Vasco Nuñez should be seized and confined in a wooden cage. The Bishop of Darien interposed in time to prevent an indignity which it might have been impossible to expiate. He prevailed upon the passionate governor, not merely to retract the order respecting the cage, but to examine the whole matter with coolness and deliberation. The result proved that his suspicions had been erroneous; and that the armament had been set on foot without any treasonable intent. Vasco Nuñez was therefore set at liberty, after having agreed to certain precautionary conditions; but he remained cast down in spirit and impoverished in fortune, by the harassing measures of Pedrarias.

CHAPTER XXII.

EXPEDITION OF MORALES AND PIZARRO TO THE SHORES OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN—THEIR VISIT TO THE PEARL ISLANDS—THEIR DISASTROUS RETURN ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS.

THE Bishop of Darien, encouraged by the success of his intercession, endeavoured to persuade the governor to go still

further, and to permit the departure of Vasco Nuñez on his expedition to the South Sea. The jealousy of Pedrarias, however, was too strong to permit him to listen to such counsel. He was aware of the importance of the expedition, and was anxious that the Pearl Islands should be explored, which promised such abundant treasures; but he feared to increase the popularity of Vasco Nuñez, by adding such an enterprise to the number of his achievements. Pedrarias, therefore, set on foot an expedition, consisting of sixty men, but gave the command to one of his own relations, named Gaspar Morales. The latter was accompanied by Francisco Pizarro, who had already been to those parts in the train of Vasco Nuñez, and who soon rose to importance in the present enterprise by his fierce courage and domineering genius.

A brief notice of the principal incidents of this expedition is all that is necessary for the present narration.

Morales and Pizarro traversed the mountains of the isthmus by a shorter and more expeditious route than that which had been taken by Vasco Nuñez, and arrived on the shores of the South Sea at the territories of a cacique named Tutibra, by whom they were amicably entertained. Their great object was to visit the Pearl Islands: the cacique, however, had but four canoes, which were insufficient to contain their whole party. One-half of their number, therefore, remained at the village of Tutibra, under the command of a captain named Peñalosa; the residue embarked in the canoes with Morales and Pizarro. After a stormy and perilous voyage, they landed on one of the smaller islands, where they had some skirmishing with the natives, and thence made their way to the principal island of the Archipelago, to which, from the report of its great pearl fishery, Vasco Nuñez had given the name of *Isla Rica*.

The cacique of this island had long been the terror of the neighbouring coasts, invading the main land with fleets of canoes, and carrying off the inhabitants into captivity. His reception of the Spaniards was worthy of his fame. Four times did he sally forth to defend his territory, and as often was he repulsed with great slaughter. His warriors were overwhelmed with terror at the fire-arms of the Spaniards, and at their ferocious bloodhounds. Finding all resistance unavailing, the cacique was at length compelled to sue for peace. His prayers being granted, he received the conquerors into his habitation, which was well built, and of immense size.

Here he brought them, as a peace-offering, a basket curiously wrought, and filled with pearls of great beauty. Among these were two of extraordinary size and value. One weighed twenty-five carats; the other was of the size of a Muscadine pear, weighing upwards of three drachms, and of oriental colour and lustre. The cacique considered himself more than repaid by a present of hatchets, beads, and hawks'-bells: and, on the Spaniards smiling at his joy, observed, "These things I can turn to useful purpose, but of what value are those pearls to me?"

Finding, however, that these baubles were precious in the eyes of the Spaniards, he took Morales and Pizarro to the summit of a wooden tower, commanding an unbounded prospect. "Behold, before you," said he, "the infinite sea, which extends even beyond the sun beams. As to these islands which lie to the right and left, they are all subject to my sway. They possess but little gold, but the deep places of the sea around them are full of pearls. Continue to be my friends, and you shall have as many as you desire; for I value your friendship more than pearls, and, as far as in me lies, will never forfeit it."

He then pointed to the main land, where it stretched towards the east, mountain beyond mountain, until the summit of the last faded in the distance, and was scarcely seen above the watery horizon. In that direction, he said, there lay a vast country of inexhaustible riches, inhabited by a mighty nation. He went on to repeat the vague but wonderful rumours which the Spaniards had frequently heard about the great kingdom of Peru. Pizarro listened greedily to his words, and while his eye followed the finger of the cacique, as it ranged along the line of shadowy coast, his daring mind kindled with the thought of seeking this golden empire beyond the waters.*

Before leaving the island, the two captains impressed the cacique with so great an idea of the power of the king of Castile, that he agreed to become his vassal, and to render him an annual tribute of one hundred pounds weight of pearls.

The party having returned in safety to the mainland, though to a different place from that where they had embarked, Gaspar Morales sent his relation, Bernardo Morales, with ten men

* Herrera, d. 2, l. i. c. iv. P. Martyr, d. 3, c. x.

in quest of Peñalosa and his companions, who had remained in the village of Tutibra.

Unfortunately for the Spaniards, during the absence of the commanders, this Peñalosa had so exasperated the natives by his misconduct, that a conspiracy had been formed by the caciques along the coast to massacre the whole of the strangers, when the party should return from the islands.

Bernardo Morales and his companions, on their way in quest of Peñalosa, put up for the night in the village of a cacique named Chuchama, who was one of the conspirators. They were entertained with pretended hospitality. In the dead of the night, however, the house in which they were sleeping was wrapped in flames, and most of them were destroyed. Chuchama then prepared with his confederates to attack the main body of the Spaniards who remained with Morales and Pizarro.

Fortunately for the latter, there was among the Indians who had accompanied them to the islands a cacique named Chiruca, who was in secret correspondence with the conspirators. Some circumstances in his conduct excited their suspicions; they put him to the torture and drew from him a relation of the massacre of their companions, and of the attack with which they were menaced.

Morales and Pizarro were at first appalled by the overwhelming danger which surrounded them. Concealing their agitation, however, they compelled Chiruca to send a message to each of the confederate caciques, inviting him to a secret conference, under pretence of giving him important information. The caciques came at the summons: they were thus taken one by one to the number of eighteen, and put in chains. Just at this juncture Peñalosa arrived with thirty men who had remained with him at Tutibra. Their arrival was hailed with joy by their comrades, who had given them up for lost. Encouraged by this unexpected reinforcement, the Spaniards now attacked by surprise the main body of confederate Indians, who, being ignorant of the discovery of their plot, and capture of their caciques, were awaiting the return of the latter in a state of negligent security.

Pizarro led the van, and set upon the enemy at daybreak with the old Spanish war-cry of Santiago! It was a slaughter rather than a battle, for the Indians were unprepared for resistance. Before sunrise, seven hundred lay dead upon the field. Returning from the massacre, the commanders doomed

the caciques who were in chains to be torn in pieces by the bloodhounds; nor was even Chiruca spared from this sanguinary sentence. Notwithstanding this bloody revenge, the vindictive spirit of the commanders was still unappeased, and they set off to surprise the village of a cacique named Biru, who dwelt on the eastern side of the Gulf of St. Michael. He was famed for valour and for cruelty; his dwelling was surrounded by the weapons and other trophies of those whom he had vanquished; and he was said never to give quarter.

The Spaniards assailed his village before daybreak with fire and sword, and made dreadful havoc. Biru escaped from his burning habitation, rallied his people, kept up a galling fight throughout the greater part of that day, and handled the Spaniards so roughly, that, when he drew off at night, they did not venture to pursue him, but returned right gladly from his territory. According to some of the Spanish writers, the kingdom of Peru derived its name from this warlike cacique, through a blunder of the early discoverers; the assertion, however, is believed to be erroneous.

The Spanish had pushed their bloody revenge to an extreme, and were now doomed to suffer from the recoil. In the fury of their passions, they had forgotten that they were but a handful of men surrounded by savage nations. Returning wearied and disheartened from the battle with Biru, they were waylaid and assaulted by a host of Indians led on by the son of Chiruca. A javelin from his hand pierced one of the Spaniards through the breast and came out between the shoulders; several others were wounded, and the remainder were harassed by a galling fire kept up from among rocks and bushes.

Dismayed at the implacable vengeance they had aroused, the Spaniards hastened to abandon these hostile shores and make the best of their way back to Darien. The Indians, however, were not to be appeased by the mere departure of the intruders. They followed them perseveringly for seven days, hanging on their skirts, and harassing them by continual alarms. Morales and Pizarro, seeing the obstinacy of their pursuit, endeavoured to gain a march upon them by stratagem. Making large fires as usual one night about the place of their encampment, they left them burning to deceive the enemy while they made a rapid retreat. Among their number was one poor fellow named Velasquez, who was so grievously wounded that he could not walk. Unable to accompany

his countrymen in their flight, and dreading to fall into the merciless hands of the savages, he determined to hang himself, nor could the prayers and even tears of his comrades dissuade him from his purpose.

The stratagem of the Spaniards, however, was unavailing. Their retreat was perceived, and at daybreak, to their dismay, they found themselves surrounded by three squadrons of savages. Unable, in their haggard state, to make head against so many foes, they remained drawn up all day on the defensive, some watching while others reposed. At night they lit their fires and again attempted to make a secret retreat. The Indians, however, were as usual on their traces, and wounded several with arrows. Thus pressed and goaded, the Spaniards became desperate, and fought like madmen, rushing upon the very darts of the enemy.

Morales now resorted to an inhuman and fruitless expedient to retard his pursuers. He caused several Indian prisoners to be slain, hoping that their friends would stop to lament over them; but the sight of their mangled bodies only increased the fury of the savages and the obstinacy of their pursuit.

For nine days were the Spaniards hunted in this manner about the woods and mountains, the swamps and fens, wandering they knew not whither, and returning upon their steps, until, to their dismay, they found themselves in the very place where, several days previously, they had been surrounded by the three squadrons.

Many now began to despair of ever escaping with life from this trackless wilderness, thus teeming with deadly foes. It was with difficulty their commanders could rally their spirits, and encourage them to persevere. Entering a thick forest they were again assailed by a band of Indians, but despair and fury gave them strength: they fought like wild beasts rather than like men, and routed the foe with dreadful carnage. They had hoped to gain a breathing time by this victory, but a new distress attended them. They got entangled in one of those deep and dismal marshes which abound on those coasts, and in which the wanderer is often drowned or suffocated. For a whole day they toiled through brake and bramble, and miry fen, with the water reaching to their girdles. At length they extricated themselves from the swamp, and arrived at the sea shore. The tide was out, but was about to return, and on this coast it rises rapidly to a great height. Fearing to be overwhelmed by the rising surf, they hastened to climb a rock

out of reach of the swelling waters. Here they threw themselves on the earth, panting with fatigue and abandoned to despair. A savage wilderness filled with still more savage foes, was on one side, on the other the roaring sea. How were they to extricate themselves from these surrounding perils? While reflecting on their desperate situation, they heard the voices of Indians. On looking cautiously round, they beheld four canoes entering a neighbouring creek. A party was immediately despatched who came upon the savages by surprise, drove them into the woods, and seized upon the canoes. In these frail barks the Spaniards escaped from their perilous neighbourhood, and, traversing the Gulf of St. Michael, landed in a less hostile part, from whence they set out a second time across the mountains.

It is needless to recount the other hardships they endured, and their further conflicts with the Indians; suffice it to say, after a series of almost incredible sufferings and disasters, they at length arrived in a battered and emaciated condition at Darien. Throughout all their toils and troubles, however, they had managed to preserve a part of the treasure they had gained in the islands; especially the pearls given them by the cacique of Isla Rica. These were objects of universal admiration. One of them was put up at auction, and bought by Pedrarias, and was afterwards presented by his wife Doña Isabella de Bobadilla to the Empress, who, in return, gave her four thousand ducats.*

Such was the cupidity of the colonists, that the sight of these pearls and the reputed wealth of the islands of the Southern Sea, and the kingdoms on its borders, made far greater impression on the public mind, than the tale told by the adventurers of all the horrors they had passed; and every one was eager to seek these wealthy regions beyond the mountains.

* Herrera, Hist. Ind. d. 2, l. i. c. 4.

CHAPTER XXIII.

UNFORTUNATE ENTERPRISES OF THE OFFICERS OF PEDRARIAS—
MATRIMONIAL COMPACT BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND VASCO
NUÑEZ.

IN narrating the preceding expedition of Morales and Pizarro, we have been tempted into what may almost be deemed an episode, though it serves to place in a proper light the lurking difficulties and dangers which beset the expeditions of Vasco Nuñez to the same regions, and his superior prudence and management in avoiding them. It is not the object of this narrative, however, to record the general events of the colony under the administration of Don Pedrarias Davila. We refrain, therefore, from detailing various expeditions set on foot by him to explore and subjugate the surrounding country; and which, being ignorantly or rashly conducted, too often ended in misfortune and disgrace. One of these was to the province of Zenu, where gold was supposed to be taken in the rivers in nets; and where the Bachelor Enciso once undertook to invade the sepulchres. A captain named Francisco Becerra penetrated into this country at the head of one hundred and eighty men, well armed and equipped, and provided with three pieces of artillery; but neither the commander nor any of his men returned. An Indian boy who accompanied them was the only one who escaped, and told the dismal tale of their having fallen victims to the assaults and stratagems and poisoned arrows of the Indians.

Another band was defeated by Tubanama, the ferocious cacique of the mountains, who bore as banners the bloody shirts of the Spaniards he had slain in former battles. In fine, the colony became so weakened by these repeated losses, and the savages so emboldened by success, that the latter beleaguered it with their forces, harassed it by assaults and ambuscades, and reduced it to great extremity. Such was the alarm in Darien, says the Bishop Las Casas, that the people feared to be burnt in their houses. They kept a watchful eye upon the mountains, the plains, and the very branches of the trees. Their imaginations were infected by their fears. If they looked toward the land, the long, waving grass of the savannahs appeared to them to be moving hosts of Indians. If they looked towards the sea, they fancied they beheld fleets of

canoes in the distance. Pedrarias endeavoured to prevent all rumours from abroad that might increase this fevered state of alarm; at the same time he ordered the smelting-house to be closed, which was never done but in time of war. This was done at the suggestion of the Bishop, who caused prayers to be put up, and fasts proclaimed, to avert the impending calamities.

While Pedrarias was harassed and perplexed by these complicated evils, he was haunted by continual apprehensions of the ultimate ascendancy of Vasco Nuñez. He knew him to be beloved by the people, and befriended by the Bishop; and he had received proofs that his services were highly appreciated by the king. He knew also that representations had been sent home by him and his partisans, of the evils and abuses of the colony under the present rule, and of the necessity of a more active and efficient governor. He dreaded lest these representations should ultimately succeed; that he should be undermined in the royal favour, and Vasco Nuñez be elevated upon his ruins.

The politic bishop perceived the uneasy state of the governor's mind, and endeavoured, by means of his apprehensions, to effect that reconciliation which he had sought in vain to produce through more generous motives. He represented to him that his treatment of Vasco Nuñez was odious in the eyes of the people, and must eventually draw on him the displeasure of his sovereign. "But why persist," added he, "in driving a man to become your deadliest enemy, whom you may grapple to your side as your firmest friend? You have several daughters—give him one in marriage; you will then have for a son-in-law a man of merit and popularity, who is a hidalgo by birth, and a favourite of the king. You are advanced in life and infirm; he is in the prime and vigour of his days, and possessed of great activity. You can make him your lieutenant; and while you repose from your toils, he can carry on the affairs of the colony with spirit and enterprise; and all his achievements will redound to the advancement of your family and the splendour of your administration."

The governor and his lady were won by the eloquence of the bishop and readily listened to his suggestions; and Vasco Nuñez was but too happy to effect a reconciliation on such flattering terms. Written articles were accordingly drawn up and exchanged, contracting a marriage between him and the eldest daughter of Pedrarias. The young lady was then in

Spain, but was to be sent for, and the nuptials were to be celebrated on her arrival at Darien.

Having thus fulfilled his office of peace-maker, and settled, as he supposed, all feuds and jealousies on the sure and permanent foundation of family alliance, the worthy bishop departed shortly afterwards for Spain.

CHAPTER XXIV.

VASCO NUÑEZ TRANSPORTS SHIPS ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN.—(1516.)

BEHOLD Vasco Nuñez once more in the high career of prosperity! His most implacable enemy had suddenly been converted into his dearest friend; for the governor, now that he looked upon him as his son-in-law, loaded him with favours. Above all, he authorized him to build brigantines and make all the necessary preparations for his long-desired expedition to explore the Southern Ocean. The place appointed for these purposes was the port of Careta, situated to the west of Darien; from whence there was supposed to be the most convenient route across the mountains. A town called Acla had been founded at this port; and the fortress was already erected, of which Lope de Olano was Alcalde; Vasco Nuñez was now empowered to continue the building of the town. Two hundred men were placed under his command to aid him in carrying his plans into execution, and a sum of money was advanced to him out of the royal treasury. His supply of funds, however, was not sufficient; but he received assistance from a private source. There was a notary at Darien, named Hernando de Arguello, a man of some consequence in the community, and who had been one of the most furious opponents of the unfortunate Nicuesa. He had amassed considerable property, and now embarked a great part of it in the proposed enterprise, on condition, no doubt, of sharing largely in its anticipated profits.

On arriving at Acla, Vasco Nuñez set to work to prepare the materials of four brigantines that were to be launched into the South Sea. The timber was felled on the Atlantic seaboard; and was then, with the anchors and rigging, trans-

ported across the lofty ridge of mountains to the opposite shores of the isthmus. Several Spaniards, thirty Negroes, and a great number of Indians were employed for the purpose. They had no other roads but Indian paths, straggling through almost impervious forests, across torrents, and up rugged defiles, broken by rocks and precipices. In this way they toiled like ants up the mountains, with their ponderous burthens, under the scorching rays of a tropical sun. Many of the poor Indians sank by the way and perished under this stupendous task. The Spaniards and Negroes, being of hardier constitutions, were better able to cope with the incredible hardships to which they were subjected. On the summit of the mountains a house had been provided for their temporary repose. After remaining here a little time to refresh themselves and gain new strength, they renewed their labours, descending the opposite side of the mountains until they reached the navigable part of a river, which they called the Balsas, and which flowed into the Pacific.

Much time and trouble and many lives were expended on this arduous undertaking, before they had transported to the river sufficient timber for two brigantines; while the timber for the other two, and the rigging and munitions for the whole, yet remained to be brought. To add to their difficulties, they had scarcely begun to work upon the timber before they discovered that it was totally useless, being subject to the ravages of the worms from having been cut in the vicinity of salt water. They were obliged, therefore, to begin anew, and fell trees on the border of the river.

Vasco Nuñez maintained his patience and perseverance, and displayed admirable management under these delays and difficulties. Their supply of food being scanty, he divided his people, Spaniards, Negroes, and Indians, into three bands; one was to cut and saw the wood, another to bring the rigging and iron-work from Acla, which was twenty-two leagues distant; and the third to forage the neighbouring country for provisions.

Scarcely was the timber felled and shaped for use when the rains set in, and the river swelled and overflowed its banks so suddenly, that the workmen barely escaped with their lives by clambering into the trees; while the wood on which they had been working was either buried in sand or slime, or swept away by the raging torrent. Famine was soon added to their other distresses. The foraging party was absent and did not

return with food; and the swelling of the river cut them off from that part of the country from whence they obtained their supplies. They were reduced, therefore, to such scarcity, as to be fain to assuage their hunger with such roots as they could gather in the forests.

In this extremity the Indians bethought themselves of one of their rude and simple expedients. Plunging into the river they fastened a number of logs together with withes, and connected them with the opposite bank so as to make a floating bridge. On this a party of the Spaniards crossed with great difficulty and peril, from the violence of the current, and the flexibility of the bridge, which often sank beneath them until the water rose above their girdles. On being safely landed, they foraged the neighbourhood, and procured a supply of provisions sufficient for the present emergency.

When the river subsided the workmen again resumed their labours; a number of recruits arrived from Acla, bringing various supplies, and the business of the enterprise was pressed with redoubled ardour, until, at length, after a series of incredible toils and hardships, Vasco Nuñez had the satisfaction to behold two of his brigantines floating on the river Balsas. As soon as they could be equipped for sea, he embarked in them with as many Spaniards as they could carry; and, issuing forth from the river, launched triumphantly on the great ocean he had discovered.

We can readily imagine the exultation of this intrepid adventurer, and how amply he was repaid for all his sufferings when he first spread a sail upon that untraversed ocean and felt that the range of an unknown world was open to him.

There are points in the history of these Spanish discoveries of the western hemisphere that make us pause with wonder and admiration at the daring spirit of the men who conducted them and the appalling difficulties surmounted by their courage and perseverance. We know few instances, however, more striking than this piecemeal transportation across the mountains of Darien of the first European ships that ploughed the waves of the Pacific; and we can readily excuse the boast of the old Castilian writers when they exclaim "that none but Spaniards could ever have conceived or persisted in such an undertaking, and no commander in the new world but Vasco Nuñez could have conducted it to a successful issue."*

* Herrera, d. 2, l. ii. c. 11.

CHAPTER XXV.

CRUISE OF VASCO NUÑEZ IN THE SOUTHERN SEA—RUMOURS FROM
ACLA.

THE first cruise of Vasco Nuñez was to the group of Pearl islands, on the principal one of which he disembarked the greater part of his crews, and despatched the brigantines to the main land to bring off the remainder. It was his intention to construct the other two vessels of his proposed squadron at this island. During the absence of the brigantines he ranged the island with his men to collect provisions and to establish a complete sway over the natives. On the return of his vessels, and while preparations were making for the building of the others, he embarked with a hundred men and departed on a reconnoitering cruise to the eastward towards the region pointed out by the Indians as abounding in riches.

Having passed about twenty leagues beyond the Gulf of San Miguel, the mariners were filled with apprehension at beholding a great number of whales, which resembled a reef of rocks stretching far into the sea and lashed by breakers. In an unknown ocean like this every unusual object is apt to inspire alarm. The scamen feared to approach these fancied dangers in the dark; Vasco Nuñez anchored, therefore, for the night under a point of land, intending to continue in the same direction on the following day. When the morning dawned, however, the wind had changed and was contrary; whereupon he altered his course and thus abandoned a cruise, which, if persevered in, might have terminated in the discovery of Peru! Steering for the main land, he anchored on that part of the coast governed by the cacique Chuchama, who had massacred Bernardo Morales and his companions when reposing in his village. Here, landing with his men, Vasco Nuñez came suddenly upon the dwelling of the cacique. The Indians sallied forth to defend their homes, but were routed with great loss; and ample vengeance was taken upon them for their outrage upon the laws of hospitality. Having thus avenged the death of his countrymen, Vasco Nuñez re-embarked and returned to Isla Rica.

He now applied himself diligently to complete the building of his brigantines, despatching men to Acla to bring the neces-

sary stores and rigging across the mountains. While thus occupied, a rumour reached him that a new governor named Lope de Sosa was coming out from Spain to supersede Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was troubled at these tidings. A new governor would be likely to adopt new measures, or to have new favourites. He feared, therefore, that some order might come to suspend or embarrass his expedition, or that the command of it might be given to another. In his perplexity he held a consultation with several of his confidential officers.

After some debate, it was agreed among them that a trusty and intelligent person should be sent as a scout to Acla under pretence of procuring munitions for the ships. Should he find Pedrarias in quiet possession of the government, he was to account to him for the delay of the expedition; to request that the time allotted to it might be extended, and to request reinforcements and supplies. Should he find, however, that a new governor was actually arrived, he was to return immediately with the tidings. In such case it was resolved to put to sea before any contrary orders could arrive, trusting eventually to excuse themselves on the plea of zeal and good intentions.

CHAPTER XXVI.

RECONNOITERING EXPEDITION OF GARABITO — STRATAGEM OF PEDRARIAS TO ENTRAP VASCO NUÑEZ.

THE person entrusted with the reconnoitering expedition to Acla was Andres Garabito, in whose fidelity and discretion Vasco Nuñez had implicit confidence. His confidence was destined to be fatally deceived. According to the assertions of contemporaries, this Garabito cherished a secret and vindictive enmity against his commander, arising from a simple but a natural cause. Vasco Nuñez had continued to have a fondness for the Indian damsel, daughter of the cacique Careta, whom he had received from her father as a pledge of amity. Some dispute arose concerning her on one occasion between him and Garabito, in the course of which he expressed himself in severe and galling language. Garabito was deeply mortified at some of his expressions, and, being of a malignant spirit, determined on a dastardly revenge. He wrote pri-

vately to Pedrarias, assuring him that Vasco Nuñez had no intention of solemnizing his marriage with his daughter, being completely under the influence of an Indian paramour; that he made use of the friendship of Pedrarias merely to further his own selfish views, intending, as soon as his ships were ready, to throw off all allegiance, and to put to sea as an independent commander.

This mischievous letter Garabito had written immediately after the last departure of Vasco Nuñez from Acla. Its effects upon the proud and jealous spirit of the governor may easily be conceived. All his former suspicions were immediately revived. They acquired strength during a long interval that elapsed without tidings being received from the expedition. There were designing and prejudiced persons at hand who perceived and quickened these jealous feelings of the governor. Among these was the Bachelor Corral, who cherished a deep grudge against Vasco Nuñez for having once thrown him into prison for his factious conduct; and Alonzo de la Puente, the royal treasurer, whom Vasco Nuñez had affronted by demanding the re-payment of a loan. Such was the tempest that was gradually gathering in the factious little colony of Darien.

The subsequent conduct of Garabito gives much confirmation to the charge of perfidy that has been advanced against him. When he arrived at Acla he found that Pedrarias remained in possession of the government; for his intended successor had died in the very harbour. The conduct and conversation of Garabito was such as to arouse suspicions; he was arrested, and his papers and letters were sent to Pedrarias. When examined he readily suffered himself to be wrought upon by threats of punishment and promises of pardon, and revealed all that he knew, and declared still more that he suspected and surmised, of the plans and intentions of Vasco Nuñez.

The arrest of Garabito, and the seizure of his letters, produced a great agitation at Darien. It was considered a revival of the ancient animosity between the governor and Vasco Nuñez, and the friends of the latter trembled for his safety.

Hernando de Arguello, especially, was in great alarm. He had embarked the most of his fortune in the expedition, and the failure of it would be ruinous to him. He wrote to Vasco Nuñez, informing him of the critical posture of affairs, and urging him to put to sea without delay. He would be protected at all events, he said, by the Jeronimite Fathers at San

Domingo, who were at that time all-powerful in the new world, and who regarded his expedition as calculated to promote the glory of God as well as the dominion of the king.* This letter fell into the hands of Pedrarias, and convinced him of the existence of a dangerous plot against his authority. He immediately ordered Arguello to be arrested; and now devised means to get Vasco Nuñez within his power. While the latter remained on the shores of the South Sea with his brigantines and his band of hearty and devoted followers, Pedrarias knew that it would be in vain to attempt to take him by force. Dissembling his suspicions and intentions, therefore, he wrote to him in the most amicable terms, requesting him to repair immediately to Acla, as he wished to hold a conference with him about the impending expedition. Fearing, however, that Vasco Nuñez might suspect his motives and refuse to comply, he, at the same time, ordered Francisco Pizarro to muster all the armed force he could collect, and to seek and arrest his late patron and commander wherever he might be found.

So great was the terror inspired by the arrest of Arguello, and by the general violence of Pedrarias, that, though Vasco Nuñez was a favourite with the great mass of the people, no one ventured to warn him of the danger that attended his return to Acla.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VASCO NUÑEZ AND THE ASTROLOGER—HIS RETURN TO ACLA.

THE old Spanish writers who have treated of the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez, record an anecdote which is worthy of being cited, as characteristic of the people and the age. Among the motley crowd of adventurers lured across the ocean by the reputed wealth and wonders of the new world, was an Italian

* In consequence of the eloquent representations made to the Spanish Government by the venerable Las Casas, of the cruel wrongs and oppressions practised upon the Indians in the colonies, the Cardinal Ximenes, in 1516, sent out three Jeronimite Friars, chosen for their zeal and abilities, clothed with full powers to inquire into and remedy all abuses, and to take all proper measures for the good government, religious instruction, and effectual protection of the natives. The exercise of their powers at San Domingo made a great sensation in the new world, and, for a time, had a beneficial effect in checking the oppressive and licentious conduct of the colonists.

astrologer, a native of Venice, named Micer Codro. At the time that Vasco Nuñez held supreme sway at Darien, this reader of the stars had cast his horoscope, and pretended to foretell his destiny. Pointing one night to a certain star, he assured him that in the year in which he should behold that star in a part of the heavens which he designated, his life would be in "imminent jeopardy; but should he survive this year of peril, he would become the richest and most renowned captain throughout the Indies.

Several years, it is added, had elapsed since this prediction was made; yet, that it still dwelt in the mind of Vasco Nuñez, was evident from the following circumstance. While waiting the return of his messenger, Garabito, he was on the shore of Isla Rica one serene evening, in company with some of his officers, when, regarding the heavens, he beheld the fated star exactly in that part of the firmament which had been pointed out by the Italian astrologer. Turning to his companions, with a smile, "Behold," said he, "the wisdom of those who believe in sooth-sayers, and, above all, in such an astrologer as Micer Codro! According to his prophecy, I should now be in imminent peril of my life; yet, here I am, within reach of all my wishes; sound in health, with four brigantines and three hundred men at my command, and on the point of exploring this great southern ocean."

At this fated juncture, say the chroniclers, arrived the hypocritical letter of Pedrarias, inviting him to an interview at Acla! The discreet reader will decide for himself what credit to give to this anecdote, or rather what allowance to make for the little traits of coincidence gratuitously added to the original fact by writers who delight in the marvellous. The tenor of this letter awakened no suspicion in the breast of Vasco Nuñez, who reposed entire confidence in the amity of the governor as his intended father-in-law, and appears to have been unconscious of any thing in his own conduct that could warrant hostility. Leaving his ships in command of Francisco Compañón, he departed immediately to meet the governor at Acla, unattended by any armed force.

The messengers who had brought the letter maintained at first a cautious silence as to the events which had transpired at Darien. They were gradually won, however, by the frank and genial manners of Vasco Nuñez, and grieved to see so gallant a soldier hurrying into the snare. Having crossed the mountains and drawn near to Acla, their kind feelings got the

better of their caution, and they revealed the true nature of their errand, and the hostile intentions of Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was struck with astonishment at the recital; but, being unconscious, it is said, of any evil intention, he could scarcely credit this sudden hostility in a man who had but recently promised him his daughter in marriage. He imagined the whole to be some groundless jealousy which his own appearance would dispel, and accordingly continued on his journey. He had not proceeded far, however, when he was met by a band of armed men, led by Francisco Pizarro. The latter stepped forward to arrest his ancient commander. Vasco Nuñez paused for a moment, and regarded him with a look of reproachful astonishment. "How is this, Francisco?" exclaimed he. "Is this the way you have been accustomed to receive me?" Offering no further remonstrance, he suffered himself quietly to be taken prisoner by his former adherent, and conducted in chains to Acla. Here he was thrown into prison, and Bartolome Hurtado, once his favourite officer, was sent to take command of his squadron.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TRIAL OF VASCO NUÑEZ.

DON PEDRARIAS concealed his exultation at the success of the stratagem by which he had ensnared his generous and confiding rival. He even visited him in prison, and pretended deep concern at being obliged to treat him with this temporary rigour, attributing it entirely to certain accusations lodged against him by the Treasurer Alonzo de la Puente, which his official situation compelled him to notice and investigate.

"Be not afflicted, however, my son!" said the hypocrite, "an investigation will, doubtless, not merely establish your innocence, but serve to render your zeal and loyalty towards your sovereign still more conspicuous."

While Pedrarias assumed this soothing tone towards his prisoner, he urged the Alcalde Mayor Espinosa to proceed against him with the utmost rigour of the law.

The charge brought against him of a treasonable conspiracy

to cast off all allegiance to the crown, and to assume an independent sway on the borders of the Southern Sea, was principally supported by the confessions of Andres Garabito. The evidence is also cited of a soldier, who stood sentinel one night near the quarters of Vasco Nuñez on Isla Rica, and who, being driven to take shelter from the rain under the eaves of the house, overheard a conversation between that commander and certain of his officers, wherein they agreed to put to sea with the squadron on their own account, and to set the governor at defiance. This testimony, according to Las Casas, arose from a misconstruction on the part of the sentinel, who only heard a portion of their conversation, relating to their intention of sailing without waiting for orders, in case a new governor should arrive to supersede Pedrarias.

The governor in the mean time informed himself from day to day and hour to hour of the progress of the trial, and, considering the evidence sufficiently strong to warrant his personal hostility, he now paid another visit to his prisoner, and, throwing off all affectation of kindness, upbraided him in the most passionate manner.

"Hitherto," said he, "I have treated you as a son, because I thought you loyal to your king, and to me as his representative; but as I find you have meditated rebellion against the crown of Castile, I cast you off from my affections, and shall henceforth treat you as an enemy."

Vasco Nuñez indignantly repelled the charge, and appealed to the confiding frankness of his conduct as a proof of innocence. "Had I been conscious of my guilt," said he, "what could have induced me to come here and put myself into your hands? Had I meditated rebellion, what prevented me from carrying it into effect? I had four ships ready to weigh anchor, three hundred brave men at my command, and an open sea before me. What had I to do but to spread sail and press forward? There was no doubt of finding a land, whether rich or poor, sufficient for me and mine, far beyond the reach of your control. In the innocence of my heart, nowever, I came here promptly, at your mere request, and my reward is slander, indignity, and chains!"

The noble and ingenuous appeal of Vasco Nuñez had no effect on the prejudiced feelings of the governor; on the contrary, he was but the more exasperated against his prisoner, and ordered that his irons should be doubled.

The trial was now urged by him with increased eagerness.

Lest the present accusation should not be sufficient to effect the ruin of his victim, the old inquest into his conduct as governor, which had remained suspended for many years, was revived, and he was charged anew with the wrongs inflicted on the Bachelor Enciso, and with the death of the unfortunate Nicuesa.

Notwithstanding all these charges, the trial went on slowly, with frequent delays; for the Alcalde Mayor, Gaspar de Espinosa, seems to have had but little relish for the task assigned him, and to have needed frequent spurring from the eager and passionate governor. He probably considered the accused as technically guilty, though innocent of all intentional rebellion, but was ordered to decide according to the strict letter of the law. He therefore at length gave a reluctant verdict against Vasco Nuñez, but recommended him to mercy, on account of his great services, or entreated that, at least, he might be permitted to appeal. "No!" said the unrelenting Pedrarias. "If he has merited death, let him suffer death!" He accordingly condemned him to be beheaded. The same sentence was passed upon several of his officers who were implicated in his alleged conspiracy; among these was Hernando de Arguello, who had written the letter to Vasco Nuñez, informing him of the arrest of his messenger, and advising him to put to sea, without heeding the hostility of Pedrarias. As to the perfidious informer Garabito, he was pardoned and set at liberty.

In considering this case, as far as we are enabled, from the imperfect testimony that remains on record, we are inclined to think it one where passion and self-interest interfered with the pure administration of justice. Pedrarias had always considered Vasco Nuñez as a dangerous rival, and, though his jealousy had been for some time lulled by looking on him as an intended son-in-law, it was revived by the suggestion that he intended to evade his alliance, and to dispute his authority. His exasperated feelings hurried him too far to retreat, and, having loaded his prisoner with chains and indignities, his death became indispensable to his own security.

For our own part, we have little doubt that it was the fixed intention of Vasco Nuñez, after he had once succeeded in the arduous undertaking of transporting his ships across the mountains, to suffer no capricious order from Pedrarias, or any other governor, to defeat the enterprise which he had so long meditated, and for which he had so laboriously prepared. It is probable he may have expressed such general determina-

tion in the hearing of Garabito and of others of his companions. We can find ample excuse for such a resolution in his consciousness of his own deserts; his experience of past hindrances to his expedition, arising from the jealousy of others; his feeling of some degree of authority, from his office of Adelantado; and his knowledge of the favourable disposition and kind intentions of his sovereign towards him. We acquit him entirely of the senseless idea of rebelling against the crown; and suggest these considerations in palliation of any meditated disobedience of Pedrarias, should such a charge be supposed to have been substantiated.

CHAPTER XXIX.

EXECUTION OF VASCO NUÑEZ.—(1517.)

It was a day of gloom and horror at Acla, when Vasco Nuñez and his companions were led forth to execution. The populace were moved to tears at the unhappy fate of a man whose gallant deeds had excited their admiration, and whose generous qualities had won their hearts. Most of them regarded him as the victim of a jealous tyrant; and even those who thought him guilty, saw something brave and brilliant in the very crime imputed to him. Such, however, was the general dread inspired by the severe measures of Pedrarias, that no one dared to lift up his voice, either in murmur or remonstrance.

The public crier walked before Vasco Nuñez, proclaiming, "This is the punishment inflicted by command of the king and his lieutenant, Don Pedrarias Davila, on this man, as a traitor and an usurper of the territories of the crown."

When Vasco Nuñez heard these words, he exclaimed indignantly, "It is false! never did such a crime enter my mind. I have ever served my king with truth and loyalty, and sought to augment his dominions."

These words were of no avail in his extremity, but they were fully believed by the populace.

The execution took place in the public square of Acla; and we are assured by the historian, Oviedo, who was in the colony at the time, that the cruel Pedrarias was a secret witness of the bloody spectacle, which he contemplated from between the

reeds of the wall of a house, about twelve paces from the scaffold!*

Vasco Nuñez was the first to suffer death. Having confessed himself and partaken of the sacrament, he ascended the scaffold with a firm step and a calm and manly demeanour; and laying his head upon the block, it was severed in an instant from his body. Three of his officers, Valderrabano, Botello, and Hernan Muños, were in like manner brought one by one to the block, and the day had nearly expired before the last of them was executed.

One victim still remained. It was Hernan de Arguello, who had been condemned as an accomplice, for having written the intercepted letter.

The populace could no longer restrain their feelings. They had not dared to intercede for Vasco Nuñez, knowing the implacable enmity of Pedrarias; but they now sought the governor, and throwing themselves at his feet, entreated that this man might be spared, as he had taken no active part in the alleged treason. The daylight, they said, was at an end, and it seemed as if God had hastened the night, to prevent the execution.

The stern heart of Pedrarias was not to be touched. "No," said he, "I would sooner die myself than spare one of them." The unfortunate Arguello was led to the block. The brief tropical twilight was past, and in the gathering gloom of the night the operations on the scaffold could not be distinguished. The multitude stood listening in breathless silence, until the stroke of the executioner told that all was accomplished. They then dispersed to their homes with hearts filled with grief and bitterness, and a night of lamentation succeeded to this day of horrors.

The vengeance of Pedrarias was not satisfied with the death of his victim; he confiscated his property and dishonoured his remains, causing his head to be placed upon a pole and exposed for several days in the public square.†

Thus perished, in his forty-second year, in the prime and vigour of his days and the full career of his glory, one of the most illustrious and deserving of the Spanish discoverers—a victim to the basest and most perfidious envy.

How vain are our most confident hopes, our brightest triumphs! When Vasco Nuñez from the mountains of Darien

* Oviedo, Hist. Ind. p. 2, c. 9, MS.

† Oviedo, ubi sup.

beheld the Southern Ocean revealed to his gaze, he considered its unknown realms at his disposal. When he had launched his ships upon its waters, and his sails weré in a manner flapping in the wind, to bear him in quest of the wealthy empire of Peru, he scoffed at the prediction of the astrologer, and defied the influence of the stars. Behold him interrupted at the very moment of his departure; betrayed into the hands of his most invidious foe; the very enterprise that was to have crowned him with glory wrested into a crime; and himself hurried to a bloody and ignominious grave, at the foot, as it were, of the mountain from whence he had made his discovery! His fate, like that of his renowned predecessor, Columbus, proves that it is sometimes dangerous even to discern too greatly!

THE FORTUNES OF VALDIVIA AND HIS COMPANIONS.

It was in the year 1512 that Valdivia, the regidor of Darien, was sent to Hispaniola by Vasco Nuñez de Balboa for reinforcements and supplies for the colony. He set sail in a caravel, and pursued his voyage prosperously until he arrived in sight of the Island of Jamaica. Here he was encountered by one of the violent hurricanes which sweep those latitudes, and driven on the shoals and sunken rocks called the Vipers, since infamous for many a shipwreck. His vessel soon went to pieces, and Valdivia and his crew, consisting of twenty men, escaped with difficulty in the boat, without having time to secure a supply either of water or provisions. Having no sails, and their oars being scarcely fit for use, they were driven about for thirteen days, at the mercy of the currents of those unknown seas. During this time their sufferings from hunger and thirst were indescribable. Seven of their number perished, and the rest were nearly famished, when they were stranded on the eastern coast of Yucatan, in a province called Maya. Here they were set upon by the natives, who broke their boat in pieces, and carried them off captive to the cacique of the province, by whose orders they were mewed up in a kind of pen.

At first their situation appeared tolerable enough considering the horrors from which they had escaped. They were closely confined, it is true, but they had plenty to eat and drink, and soon began to recover flesh and vigour. In a little while, however, their enjoyment of this good cheer met with a sudden check, for the unfortunate Valdivia, and four of his companions, were singled out by the cacique, on account of their improved condition, to be offered up to his idols. The natives of this coast in fact were cannibals, devouring the flesh of their enemies and of such strangers as fell into their hands. The wretched Valdivia and his fellow victims, therefore, were sacrificed in

the bloody temple of the idol, and their limbs afterwards served up at a grand feast held by the cacique and his subjects.

The horror of the survivors may be more readily imagined than described. Their hearts died within them when they heard the yells and howlings of the savages over their victims, and the still more horrible revelry of their cannibal orgies. They turned with loathing from the food set so abundantly before them, at the idea that it was but intended to fatten them for a future banquet.

Recovering from the first stupor of alarm, their despair lent them additional force. They succeeded in breaking, in the night, from the kind of cage in which they were confined, and fled to the depths of the forest. Here they wandered about forlorn, exposed to all the dangers and miseries of the wilderness; famishing with hunger, yet dreading to approach the haunts of men. At length their sufferings drove them forth from the woods into another part of the country, where they were again taken captive. The cacique of this province, however, was an enemy to the one from whom they had escaped, and of less cruel propensities. He spared their lives, and contented himself with making them slaves, exacting from them the severest labour. They had to cut and draw wood, to procure water from a distance, and to carry enormous burthens. The cacique died soon after their capture, and was succeeded by another called Taxmar. He was a chief of some talent and sagacity, but he continued the same rigorous treatment of the captives. By degrees they sank beneath the hardships of their lot, until only two were left; one of them, a sturdy sailor named Gonzalo Guerrero, the other a kind of clerical adventurer, named Jeronimo de Aguilar. The sailor had the good luck to be transferred to the service of the cacique of the neighbouring province of Chatemal, by whom he was treated with kindness. Being a thorough son of the ocean, seasoned to all weathers, and ready for any chance or change, he soon accommodated himself to his new situation, followed the cacique to the wars, rose by his hardihood and prowess to be a distinguished warrior, and succeeded in gaining the heart and hand of an Indian princess.

The other survivor, Jeronimo de Aguilar, was of a different complexion. He was a native of Ecija in Andalusia, and had been brought up to the church and regularly ordained, and shortly afterwards had sailed in one of the expeditions to San Domingo, from whence he had passed to Darien.

He proceeded in a different mode from that adopted by his comrade the sailor in his dealings with the Indians, and in one more suited to his opposite calling. Instead of playing the hero among the men and the gallant among the women, he recollected his priestly obligations to humility and chastity. Accordingly, he made himself a model of meekness and obedience to the cacique and his warriors, while he closed his eyes to the charms of the infidel women. Nay, in the latter respect, he reinforced his clerical vows by a solemn promise to God to resist all temptations of the flesh so he might be delivered out of the hands of these Gentiles.

Such were the opposite measures of the sailor and the saint, and they appear to have been equally successful. Aguilar, by his meek obedience to every order, however arbitrary and capricious, gradually won the good-will of the cacique and his family. Taxmar, however, subjected him to many trials before he admitted him to his entire confidence. One day when the Indians, painted and decorated in warlike style, were shooting at a mark, a warrior, who had for some time fixed his eyes on Aguilar, approached suddenly and seized him by the arm. "Thou seest," said he, "the certainty of these archers; if they aim at the eye, they hit the eye—if at the mouth, they hit the mouth—what wouldst thou think if thou wert to be placed instead of the mark and they were to shoot at and miss thee?"

Aguilar secretly trembled lest he should be the victim of some cruel caprice of the kind. Dissembling his fears, however, he replied with great submission, "I am your slave and you may do with me as you please, but you are too wise to destroy a slave who is so useful and obedient." His answer pleased the cacique, who had secretly sent this warrior to try his humility.

Another trial of the worthy Jeronimo was less stern and fearful indeed, but equally perplexing. The cacique had remarked his unexampled discretion with respect to the sex, but doubted his sincerity. After laying many petty temptations in his way, which Jeronimo resisted with the self-denial of a saint, he at length determined to subject him to a fiery ordeal. He accordingly sent him on a fishing expedition accompanied by a buxom damsel of fourteen years of age; they were to pass the night by the sea-side, so as to be ready to fish at the first dawn of day, and were allowed but one hammock to sleep in. It was an embarrassing predicament—not apparently to the

Indian beauty, but certainly to the scrupulous Jeronimo. He remembered, however, his double vow, and, suspending his hammock to two trees, resigned it to his companion; while, lighting a fire on the sea-shore, he stretched himself before it on the sand. It was, as he acknowledged, a night of fearful trial, for his sandy couch was cold and cheerless, the hammock warm and tempting; and the infidel damsel had been instructed to assail him with all manner of blandishments and reproaches. His resolution, however, though often shaken, was never overcome; and the morning dawned upon him still faithful to his vow.

The fishing over, he returned to the residence of the cacique, where his companion, being closely questioned, made known the triumph of his self-denial before all the people. From that time forward he was held in great respect; the cacique especially treated him with unlimited confidence, entrusting to him the care not merely of his house, but of his wives during his occasional absence.

Aguilar now felt ambitious of rising to greater consequence among the savages, but this he knew was only to be done by deeds of arms. He had the example of the sturdy seaman, Gonzalo Guerrero, before his eyes, who had become a great captain in the province in which he resided. He entreated Taxmar, therefore, to entrust him with bow and arrows, buckler and war-club, and to enroll him among his warriors. The cacique complied. Aguilar soon made himself expert at his new weapons, signalized himself repeatedly in battle, and from his superior knowledge of the arts of war, rendered Taxmar such essential service, as to excite the jealousy of some of the neighbouring caciques. One of them remonstrated with Taxmar for employing a warrior who was of a different religion, and insisted that Aguilar should be sacrificed to their gods. "No," replied Taxmar, "I will not make so base a return for such signal services; surely the gods of Aguilar must be good, since they aid him so effectually in maintaining a just cause."

The cacique was so incensed at this reply that he assembled his warriors and marched to make war upon Taxmar. Many of the counsellors of the latter urged him to give up the stranger who was the cause of this hostility. Taxmar, however, rejected their counsel with disdain and prepared for battle. Aguilar assured him that his faith in the Christian's God would be rewarded with victory; he, in fact, concerted a plan

of battle which was adopted. Concealing himself with a chosen band of warriors among thickets and herbage, he suffered the enemy to pass by in making their attack. Taxmar and his host pretended to give way at the first onset. The foe rushed heedlessly in pursuit; whereupon Aguilar and his ambuscade assaulted them in the rear. Taxmar turned upon them in front; they were thrown in confusion, routed with great slaughter, and many of their chiefs taken prisoners. This victory gave Taxmar the sway over the land, and strengthened Aguilar more than ever in his good graces.

Several years had elapsed in this manner, when, in 1517, intelligence was brought to the province of the arrival on the neighbouring coast of great vessels of wonderful construction, filled with white and bearded men, who fought with thunder and lightning. It was, in fact, the squadron of Francisco Hernandez de Cordova, then on a voyage of discovery. The tidings of this strange invasion spread consternation through the country, heightened, if we may credit the old Spanish writers, by a prophecy current among the savages of these parts, and uttered in former times by a priest named Chilam Jambal, who foretold that a white and bearded people would come from the region of the rising sun, who would overturn their idols and subjugate the land.

The heart of Jeronimo de Aguilar beat quick with hope when he heard of European ships at hand; he was distant from the coast, however, and perceived that he was too closely watched by the Indians to have any chance of escape. Dissembling his feelings, therefore, he affected to hear of the ships with perfect indifference, and to have no desire to join the strangers. The ships disappeared from the coast, and he remained disconsolate at heart, but was regarded with increased confidence by the natives.

His hopes were again revived in the course of a year or two by the arrival on the coast of other ships, which were those commanded by Juan de Grijalva, who coasted Yucatan in 1518; Aguilar, however, was again prevented by the jealous watchfulness of the Indians from attempting his escape, and when this squadron left the coast he considered all chance of deliverance at an end.

Seven years had gone by since his capture, and he had given up all hopes of being restored to his country and friends, when, in 1519, there arrived one day at the village three Indians, natives of the small island of Cozumel, which lies a few

leagues in the sea, opposite the eastern coast of Yucatan. They brought tidings of another visit of white bearded men to their shores, and one of them delivered a letter to Aguilar, which, being entirely naked, he had concealed it in the long tresses of his hair which were bound round his head.

Aguilar received the letter with wonder and delight, and read it in presence of the cacique and his warriors. It proved to be from Hernando Cortez, who was at that time on his great expedition, which ended in the conquest of Mexico. He had been obliged by stress of weather to anchor at the island of Cozumel, where he learned from the natives that several white men were detained in captivity among the Indians on the neighbouring coast of Yucatan. Finding it impossible to approach the mainland with his ships, he prevailed upon three of the islanders, by means of gifts and promises, to venture upon an embassy among their cannibal neighbours, and to convey a letter to the captive white men. Two of the smallest caravels of the squadron were sent under the command of Diego de Ordaz, who was ordered to land the three messengers at the point of Cotoche, and to wait there eight days for their return.

The letter brought by these envoys informed the Christian captives of the force and destination of the squadron of Cortez, and of his having sent the caravels to wait for them at the point of Cotoche, with a ransom for their deliverance, inviting them to hasten and join him at Cozumel.

The transport of Aguilar on first reading the letter was moderated when he reflected on the obstacles that might prevent him from profiting by this chance of deliverance. He had made himself too useful to the cacique to hope that he would readily give him his liberty, and he knew the jealous and irritable nature of the savages too well not to fear that even an application for leave to depart might draw upon him the severest treatment. He endeavoured, therefore, to operate upon the cacique through his apprehensions. To this end he informed him that the piece of paper which he held in his hand brought him a full account of the mighty armament that had arrived on the coast. He described the number of the ships and various particulars concerning the squadron, all which were amply corroborated by the testimony of the messengers. The cacique and his warriors were astonished at this strange mode of conveying intelligence from a distance, and regarded the letter as something mysterious and supernatural.

Aguilar went on to relate the tremendous and superhuman powers of the people in these ships, who, armed with thunder and lightning, wreaked destruction on all who displeased them, while they dispensed inestimable gifts and benefits on such as proved themselves their friends. He at the same time spread before the cacique various presents brought by the messengers, as specimens of the blessings to be expected from the friendship of the strangers. The intimation was effectual. The cacique was filled with awe at the recital of the terrific powers of the white men, and his eyes were dazzled by the glittering trinkets displayed before him. He entreated Aguilar, therefore, to act as his ambassador and mediator, and to secure him the amity of the strangers.

Aguilar saw with transport the prospect of a speedy deliverance. In this moment of exultation, he bethought himself of the only surviving comrade of his past fortunes, Gonzalo Guerrero, and, sending the letter of Cortez to him, invited him to accompany him in his escape. The sturdy seaman was at this time a great chieftain in his province, and his Indian bride had borne him a numerous progeny. His heart, however, yearned after his native country, and he might have been tempted to leave his honours and dignities, his infidel wife and half-savage offspring behind him, but an insuperable, though somewhat ludicrous, obstacle presented itself to his wishes. Having long since given over all expectation of a return to civilized life, he had conformed to the customs of the country, and had adopted the external signs and decorations that marked him as a warrior and a man of rank. His face and hands were indelibly painted or tattooed; his ears and lips were slit to admit huge Indian ornaments, and his nose was drawn down almost to his mouth by a massy ring of gold, and a dangling jewel.

Thus curiously garbled and disfigured, the honest seaman felt, that however he might be admired in Yucatan, he should be apt to have the rabble at his heels in Spain. He made up his mind, therefore, to remain a great man among the savages, rather than run the risk of being shown as a man-monster at home.

Finding that he declined accompanying him, Jeronimo de Aguilar set off for the point of Cotoche, escorted by three Indians. The time he had lost in waiting for Guerrero had nearly proved fatal to his hopes, for when he arrived at the point, the caravels sent by Cortez had departed, though sev-

eral crosses of reeds set up in different places gave tokens of the recent presence of Christians.

The only hope that remained, was that the squadron of Cortez might yet linger at the opposite island of Cozumel; but how was he to get there? While wandering disconsolately along the shore, he found a canoe, half buried in sand and water, and with one side in a state of decay; with the assistance of the Indians he cleaned it, and set it afloat, and on looking further he found the stave of a hogshead which might serve for a paddle. It was a frail embarkation in which to cross an arm of the sea, seven leagues wide, but there was no alternative. Prevailing on the Indians to accompany him, he launched forth in the canoe and coasted the main land until he came to the narrowest part of the strait, where it was but four leagues across; here he stood directly for Cozumel, contending, as well as he was able, with a strong current, and at length succeeded in reaching the island.

He had scarce landed when a party of Spaniards, who had been lying in wait, rushed forth from their concealment, sword in hand. The three Indians would have fled, but Aguilar reassured them, and, calling out to the Spaniards in their own language, assured them that he was a Christian. Then throwing himself upon his knees, and raising his eyes, streaming with tears, to heaven, he gave thanks to God for having restored him to his countrymen.

The Spaniards gazed at him with astonishment: from his language he was evidently a Castilian, but to all appearance he was an Indian. He was perfectly naked; wore his hair braided round his head in the manner of the country, and his complexion was burnt by the sun to a tawny colour. He had a bow in his hand, a quiver at his shoulder, and a net-work pouch at his side in which he carried his provisions.

The Spaniards proved to be a reconnoitering party, sent out by Cortez to watch the approach of the canoe, which had been descried coming from Yucatan. Cortez had given up all hopes of being joined by the captives, the caravel having waited the allotted time at Cotoche, and returned without news of them. He had, in fact, made sail to prosecute his voyage, but fortunately one of his ships had sprung a leak, which had obliged him to return to the island.

When Jeronimo de Aguilar and his companions arrived in presence of Cortez, who was surrounded by his officers, they made a profound reverence, squatted on the ground, laid their

bows and arrows beside them, and touching their right hands, wet with spittle, on the ground, rubbed them about the region of the heart, such being their sign of the most devoted submission.

Cortez greeted Aguilar with a hearty welcome, and raising him from the earth, took from his own person a large yellow mantle lined with crimson, and threw it over his shoulders. The latter, however, had for so long a time gone entirely naked, that even this scanty covering was at first almost insupportable, and he had become so accustomed to the diet of the natives, that he found it difficult to reconcile his stomach to the meat and drink set before him.

When he had sufficiently recovered from the agitation of his arrival among Christians, Cortez drew from him the particulars of his story, and found that he was related to one of his own friends, the licentiate Marcos de Aguilar. He treated him, therefore, with additional kindness and respect, and retained him about his person to aid him as an interpreter in his great Mexican expedition.

The happiness of Jeronimo de Aguilar at once more being restored to his countrymen, was doomed to suffer some alloy from the disasters that had happened in his family. Peter Martyr records a touching anecdote of the effect that had been produced upon his mother by the tidings of his misfortune. A vague report had reached her in Spain that her son had fallen into the hands of cannibals. All the horrible tales that circulated in Spain concerning the treatment of these savages to their prisoners, rushed to her imagination, and she went distracted. Whenever she beheld roasted meat, or flesh upon the spit, she would fill the house with her outcries. "Oh, wretched mother! oh, most miserable of women!" would she exclaim, "behold the limbs of my murdered son."*

It is to be hoped that the tidings of his deliverance had a favourable effect upon her intellect, and that she lived to rejoice at his after-fortunes. He served Hernando Cortez with great courage and ability throughout his Mexican conquests, acting sometimes as a soldier, sometimes as interpreter and ambassador to the Indians, and, in reward of his fidelity and services, was appointed regidor, or civil governor of the city of Mexico.

* P. Martyr, decad. 4, c. 6.

MICER CODRO, THE ASTROLOGER.

THE fate of the Italian astrologer, Micer Codro, who predicted the end of Vasco Nuñez, is related by the historian Oviedo, with some particulars that border upon the marvelous. It appears that after the death of his patron, he continued for several years rambling about the New World in the train of the Spanish discoverers; but intent upon studying the secrets of its natural history, rather than searching after its treasures.

In the course of his wanderings he was once coasting the shores of the Southern ocean in a ship commanded by one Geronimo de Valenzuela, from whom he received such cruel treatment as to cause his death, though what the nature of the treatment was, we are not precisely informed.

Finding his end approaching, the unfortunate astrologer addressed Valenzuela in the most solemn manner: "Captain," said he, "you have caused my death by your cruelty; I now summon you to appear with me, within a year, before the judgment seat of God!"

The captain made a light and scoffing answer, and treated his summons with contempt.

They were then off the coast of Veragua, near the verdant islands of Zebaco, which lie at the entrance of the Gulf of Paria. The poor astrologer gazed wistfully with his dying eyes upon the green and shady groves, and entreated the pilot or mate of the caravel to land him on one of the islands, that he might die in peace. "Micer Codro," replied the pilot, "those are not islands, but points of land; there are no islands hereabout."

"There are, indeed," replied the astrologer, "two good and pleasant islands, well watered, and near to the coast, and within them is a great bay with a harbor. Land me, I pray you, upon one of these islands, that I may have comfort in my dying hour."

The pilot, whose rough nature had been touched with pity for the condition of the unfortunate astrologer, listened to his prayer, and conveyed him to the shore, where he found the opinion he had given of the character of the coast to be correct. He laid him on the herbage in the shade, where the poor wanderer soon expired. The pilot then dug a grave at the foot of a tree, where he buried him with all possible decency, and carved a cross on the bark to mark the grave.

Some time afterwards, Oviedo, the historian, was on the island with this very pilot, who showed him the cross on the tree, and gave his honest testimony to the good character and worthy conduct of Micer Codro. Oviedo, as he regarded the nameless grave, passed the eulogium of a scholar upon the poor astrologer: "He died," says he, "like Pliny, in the discharge of his duties, travelling about the world to explore the secrets of nature." According to his account, the prediction of Micer Codro held good with respect to Valenzuela, as it had in the case of Vasco Nuñez. The captain died within the term in which he had summoned him to appear before the tribunal of God.*

* Vide Oviedo, *Hist. Gen.* l. xxxix. c. 2

JUAN PONCE DE LEON

CONQUEROR OF PORTO RICO AND DISCOVERER OF FLORIDA.

CHAPTER I.

RECONNOITERING EXPEDITION OF JUAN PONCE DE LEON TO THE
ISLAND OF BORIQUEN.—(1508.)

MANY years had elapsed since the discovery and colonization of Hayti, yet its neighbouring island of Boriquen, or, as the Spaniards called it, St. Juan, (since named Porto Rico,) remained unexplored. It was beautiful to the eye as beheld from the sea, having lofty mountains clothed with forest trees of prodigious size and magnificent foliage. There were broad fertile valleys also, always fresh and green; for the frequent showers and abundant streams in these latitudes, and the absence of all wintry frost, produce a perpetual verdure. Various ships had occasionally touched at the island, but their crews had never penetrated into the interior. It was evident, however, from the number of hamlets and scattered houses, and the smoke rising in all directions from among the trees, that it was well peopled. The inhabitants still continued to enjoy their life of indolence and freedom, unmolested by the ills that overwhelmed the neighbouring island of Hayti. The time had arrived, however, when they were to share the common lot of their fellow savages, and to sink beneath the yoke of the white man.

At the time when Nicholas de Ovando, Governor of Hispaniola, undertook to lay waste the great province of Higüey, which lay at the eastern end of Hayti, he sent, as commander of part of the troops, a veteran soldier named Juan Ponce de Leon. He was a native of Leon, in Spain, and in his boyhood had been page to Pedro Nuñez de Guzman, Señor of Toral.*

* Incas, Garcilaso de la Vega, Hist. Florida, t. iv. c. 37.

From an early age he had been schooled to war, and had served in the various campaigns against the Moors of Granada. He accompanied Columbus in his second voyage in 1493, and was afterwards, it is said, one of the partisans of Francisco Roldan, in his rebellion against the admiral. Having distinguished himself in various battles with the Indians, and acquired a name for sagacity as well as valour, he received a command subordinate to Juan de Esquibel, in the campaign against Higüey, and seconded his chief so valiantly in that sanguinary expedition, that after the subjugation of the province he was appointed to the command of it, as lieutenant of the Governor of Hispaniola.

Juan Ponce de Leon had all the impatience of quiet life and the passion for exploit of a veteran campaigner. He had not been long in the tranquil command of his province of Higüey, before he began to cast a wistful eye towards the green mountains of Boriquen. They were directly opposite, and but twelve or fourteen leagues distant, so as to be distinctly seen in the transparent atmosphere of the tropics. The Indians of the two islands frequently visited each other, and in this way Juan Ponce received the usual intelligence that the mountains he had eyed so wistfully abounded with gold. He readily obtained permission from Governor Ovando to make an expedition to this island, and embarked in the year 1508 in a caravel, with a few Spaniards and several Indian interpreters and guides.

After an easy voyage he landed on the woody shores of the island, near to the residence of the principal cacique, Agüeybana. He found the chieftain seated in patriarchal style under the shade of his native groves and surrounded by his family, consisting of his mother, step-father, brother, and sister, who vied with each other in paying homage to the strangers. Juan Ponce, in fact, was received into the bosom of the family, and the cacique exchanged names with him, which is the Indian pledge of perpetual amity. Juan Ponce also gave Christian names to the mother and step-father of the cacique, and would fain have baptized them, but they declined the ceremony, though they always took a pride in the names thus given them.

In his zeal to gratify his guests the cacique took them to various parts of the island. They found the interior to correspond with the external appearance. It was wild and mountainous, but magnificently wooded, with deep rich valleys fertilized by

limpid streams. Juan Ponce requested the cacique to reveal to him the riches of the island. The simple Indian showed him his most productive fields of Yuca, the groves laden with the most delicious fruit, the sweetest and purest fountains, and the coolest runs of water.

Ponce de Leon heeded but little these real blessings, and demanded whether the island produced no gold. Upon this, the cacique conducted him to two rivers, the Manatuabon and the Zebuco, where the very pebbles seemed richly veined with gold, and large grains shone among the sand through the limpid water. Some of the largest of these were gathered by the Indians and given to the Spaniards. The quantity thus procured confirmed the hopes of Juan Ponce; and leaving several of his companions in the house of the hospitable cacique, he returned to Hayti to report the success of his expedition. He presented the specimens of gold to the Governor Ovando, who assayed them in a crucible. The ore was not so fine as that of Hispaniola, but as it was supposed to exist in greater quantities, the Governor determined on the subjugation of the island, and confided the enterprise to Juan Ponce de Leon.

CHAPTER II.

JUAN PONCE ASPIRES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTO RICO.—
(1509.)

THE natives of Boriquen were more warlike than those of Hispaniola; being accustomed to the use of arms from the necessity of repelling the frequent invasions of the Caribs. It was supposed, therefore, that the conquest of their island would be attended with some difficulty, and Juan Ponce de Leon made another, as it were a preparatory visit, to make himself acquainted with the country, and with the nature and resources of the inhabitants. He found the companions, whom he had left there on his former visit, in good health and spirits, and full of gratitude towards the cacique Agueybana, who had treated them with undiminished hospitality. There appeared to be no need of violence to win the island from such simple-hearted and confiding people. Juan Ponce flattered himself with the hopes of being appointed to its government by Ovando,

and of bringing it peaceably into subjection. After remaining some time on the island, he returned to San Domingo to seek the desired appointment, but, to his surprise, found the whole face of affairs had changed during his absence.

His patron, the Governor Ovando, had been recalled to Spain, and Don Diego Columbus, son of the renowned discoverer, appointed in his place to the command at San Domingo. To add to the perplexities of Juan Ponce, a cavalier had already arrived from Spain, empowered by the king to form a settlement and build a fortress on the island of Porto Rico. His name was Christoval de Sotomayor; he was brother to the Count of Camina, and had been secretary to Philip I., surnamed the Handsome, king of Castile, and father of Charles V.

Don Diego Columbus was highly displeased with the act of the king in granting these powers to Sotomayor, as it had been done without his knowledge and consent, and of course in disregard of his prerogative as viceroy, to be consulted as to all appointments made within his jurisdiction. He refused, therefore, to put Sotomayor in possession of the island. He paid as little respect to the claims of Juan Ponce de Leon, whom he regarded with an ungracious eye as a favourite of his predecessor Ovando. To settle the matter effectually, he exerted what he considered his official and hereditary privilege, and chose officers to suit himself, appointing one Juan Ceron to the government of Porto Rico, and Miguel Diaz to serve as his lieutenant.*

Juan Ponce de Leon and his rival candidate, Christoval de Sotomayor, bore their disappointment with a good grace. Though the command was denied them, they still hoped to improve their fortunes in the island, and accordingly joined the crowd of adventurers that accompanied the newly appointed governor.

New changes soon took place in consequence of the jealousies and misunderstandings between King Ferdinand and the admiral as to points of privilege. The former still seemed disposed to maintain the right of making appointments without consulting Don Diego, and exerted it in the present instance; for, when Ovando, on his return to Spain, made favourable representation of the merits of Juan Ponce de Leon, and set forth his services

* If the reader has perused the history of Columbus, he may remember the romantic adventure of this Miguel Diaz with a female cacique, which led to the discovery of the gold mines of Hayna, and the founding of the city of San Domingo.

in exploring Porto Rico, the king appointed him governor of that island, and signified specifically that Don Diego Columbus should not presume to displace him.

CHAPTER III.

JUAN PONCE RULES WITH A STRONG HAND—EXASPERATION OF THE INDIANS—THEIR EXPERIMENT TO PROVE WHETHER THE SPANIARDS WERE MORTAL.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON assumed the command of the island of Boriquen in the year 1509. Being a fiery, high-handed old soldier, his first step was to quarrel with Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, the ex-governor and his lieutenant, and to send them prisoners to Spain.*

He was far more favourable to his late competitor, Christoval de Sotomayor. Finding him to be a cavalier of noble blood and high connexions, yet void of pretension, and of most accommodating temper, he offered to make him his lieutenant, and to give him the post of *Alcalde Mayor*, an offer which was very thankfully accepted.

The pride of rank, however, which follows a man even into the wilderness, soon interfered with the quiet of Sotomayor; he was ridiculed for descending so much below his birth and dignity, as to accept a subaltern situation to a simple gentleman in the island which he had originally aspired to govern. He could not withstand these sneers, but resigned his appointment, and remained in the island as a private individual; establishing himself in a village where he had a large repartimiento or allotment of Indians assigned to him by a grant from the king.

Juan Ponce fixed his seat of government in a town called Caparra, which he founded on the northern side of the island, about a league from the sea, in a neighbourhood supposed to abound in gold. It was in front of the port called Rico, which subsequently gave its name to the island. The road to the town was up a mountain, through a dense forest, and so rugged and miry that it was the bane of man and beast. It cost more to convey provisions and merchandise up this league of mountain than it had to bring them from Spain.

* Herrera, *decad.* 1, l. vii. c. 13.

Juan Ponce, being firmly seated in his government, began to carve and portion out the island, to found towns, and to distribute the natives into repartimientos, for the purpose of exacting their labour.

The poor Indians soon found the difference between the Spaniards as guests, and the Spaniards as masters. They were driven to despair by the heavy tasks imposed upon them; for to their free spirits and indolent habits, restraint and labour were worse than death. Many of the most hardy and daring proposed a general insurrection, and a massacre of their oppressors; the great mass, however, were deterred by the belief that the Spaniards were supernatural beings and could not be killed.

A shrewd and sceptical cacique named Brayoan determined to put their immortality to the test. Hearing that a young Spaniard named Salzedo was passing through his lands, he sent a party of his subjects to escort him, giving them secret instructions how they were to act. On coming to a river they took Salzedo on their shoulders to carry him across, but when in the midst of the stream, they let him fall, and, throwing themselves upon him, pressed him under water until he was drowned. Then dragging his body to the shore, and still doubting his being dead, they wept and howled over him, making a thousand apologies for having fallen upon him, and kept him so long beneath the surface.

The cacique Brayoan came to examine the body and pronounced it lifeless; but the Indians, still fearing it might possess lurking immortality and ultimately revive, kept watch over it for three days, until it showed incontestable signs of putrefaction.

Being now convinced that the strangers were mortal men like themselves, they readily entered into a general conspiracy to destroy them.*

CHAPTER IV.

CONSPIRACY OF THE CACIQUES—THE FATE OF SOTOMAYOR.

THE prime mover of the conspiracy among the natives was Agueybana, brother and successor to the hospitable cacique of

* Herrera, decad. 1, l. viii. c. 13.

the same name, who had first welcomed the Spaniards to the island, and who had fortunately closed his eyes in peace, before his native groves were made the scenes of violence and oppression. The present cacique had fallen within the repartimiento of Don Christoval de Sotomayor, and, though treated by that cavalier with kindness, could never reconcile his proud spirit to the yoke of vassalage.

Agueybana held secret councils with his confederate caciques, in which they concerted a plan of operations. As the Spaniards were scattered about in different places, it was agreed that, at a certain time, each cacique should dispatch those within his province. In arranging the massacre of those within his own domains, Agueybana assigned to one of his inferior caciques the task of surprising the village of Sotomayor, giving him 3,000 warriors for the purpose. He was to assail the village in the dead of the night, to set fire to the houses, and to slaughter all the inhabitants. He proudly, however, reserved to himself the honour of killing Don Christoval with his own hand.

Don Christoval had an unsuspected friend in the very midst of his enemies. Being a cavalier of gallant appearance and amiable and courteous manners, he had won the affections of an Indian princess, the sister of the cacique Agueybana. She had overheard enough of the war-council of her brother and his warriors to learn that Sotomayor was in danger. The life of her lover was more precious in her eyes than the safety of her brother and her tribe; hastening, therefore, to him, she told him all that she knew or feared, and warned him to be upon his guard. Sotomayor appears to have been of the most easy and incautious nature, void of all evil and deceit himself, and slow to suspect any thing of the kind in others. He considered the apprehension of the princess as dictated by her fond anxiety, and neglected to profit by her warning.

He received, however, about the same time, information from a different quarter, tending to the same point. A Spaniard, versed in the language and customs of the natives, had observed a number gathering together one evening, painted and decorated as if for battle. Suspecting some lurking mischief, he stripped and painted himself in their manner, and, favoured by the obscurity of the night, succeeded in mingling among them undiscovered. They were assembled round a fire performing one of their mystic war-dances, to the chant of an Areyto or legendary ballad. The strophes and responses

treated of revenge and slaughter, and repeatedly mentioned the death of Sotomayor.

The Spaniard withdrew unperceived, and hastened to apprise Don Christoval of his danger. The latter still made light of these repeated warnings; revolving them, however, in his mind in the stillness of the night, he began to feel some uneasiness, and determined to repair in the morning to Juan Ponce de Leon, in his strong-hold at Caparra. With his fated heedlessness, or temerity, however, he applied to Agueybana for Indians to carry his baggage, and departed slightly armed, and accompanied by but three Spaniards, although he had to pass through close and lonely forests, where he would be at the mercy of any treacherous or lurking foe.

The cacique watched the departure of his intended victim and set out shortly afterwards, dogging his steps at a distance through the forest, accompanied by a few chosen warriors. Agueybana and his party had not proceeded far when they met a Spaniard named Juan Gonzalez, who spoke the Indian language. They immediately assailed him and wounded him in several places. He threw himself at the feet of the cacique, imploring his life in the most abject terms. The chief spared him for the moment, being eager to make sure of Don Christoval. He overtook that incautious cavalier in the very heart of the woodland, and stealing silently upon him, burst forth suddenly with his warriors from the covert of the thickets, giving the fatal war whoop. Before Sotomayor could put himself upon his guard a blow from the war club of the cacique felled him to the earth, when he was quickly despatched by repeated blows. The four Spaniards who accompanied him shared his fate, being assailed, not merely by the warriors who had come in pursuit of them, but by their own Indian guides.

When Agueybana had glutted his vengeance on this unfortunate cavalier, he returned in quest of Juan Gonzalez. The latter, however, had recovered sufficiently from his wounds to leave the place where he had been assailed, and, dreading the return of the savages, had climbed into a tree and concealed himself among the branches. From thence, with trembling anxiety he watched his pursuers as they searched all the surrounding forest for him. Fortunately they did not think of looking up into the trees, but, after beating the bushes for some time, gave up the search. Though he saw them depart, yet he did not venture from his concealment until the night had closed; he then descended from the tree and made the

best of his way to the residence of certain Spaniards, where his wounds were dressed. When this was done he waited not to take repose, but repaired by a circuitous route to Caparra, and informed Juan Ponce de Leon of the danger he supposed to be still impending over Sotomayor, for he knew not that the enemy had accomplished his death. Juan Ponce immediately sent out forty men to his relief. They came to the scene of massacre, where they found the body of the unfortunate cavalier, partly buried, but with the feet out of the earth.

In the mean time the savages had accomplished the destruction of the village of Sotomayor. They approached it unperceived, through the surrounding forest, and entering it in the dead of the night, set fire to the straw-thatched houses, and attacked the Spaniards as they endeavoured to escape from the flames.

Several were slain at the onset, but a brave Spaniard, named Diego de Salazar, rallied his countrymen, inspirited them to beat off the enemy, and succeeded in conducting the greater part of them, though sorely mangled and harassed, to the strong-hold of the Governor at Caparra. Scarcely had these fugitives gained the fortress, when others came hurrying in from all quarters, bringing similar tales of conflagration and massacre. For once a general insurrection, so often planned in savage life, against the domination of the white men, was crowned with success. All the villages founded by the Spaniards had been surprised, about a hundred of their inhabitants destroyed, and the survivors driven to take refuge in a beleaguered fortress.

CHAPTER V.

WAR OF JUAN PONCE WITH THE CACIQUE AGUEYBANA.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON might now almost be considered a governor without territories, and a general without soldiers. His villages were smoking ruins, and his whole force did not amount to a hundred men, several of whom were disabled by their wounds. He had an able and implacable foe in Agueybana, who took the lead of all the other caciques, and even sent envoys to the Caribs of the neighbouring islands, entreating them to forget all ancient animosities, and to make com-

mon cause against these strangers—the deadly enemies of the whole Indian race. In the mean time the whole of this wild island was in rebellion, and the forests around the fortress of Caparra rang with the whoops and yells of the savages, the blasts of their war conchs, and the stormy roaring of their drums.

Juan Ponce was a staunch and wary old soldier, and not easily daunted. He remained grimly ensconced within his fortress, from whence he despatched messengers in all haste to Hispaniola, imploring immediate assistance. In the mean time he tasked his wits to divert the enemy and to keep them at bay. He divided his little force into three bodies of about thirty men each, under the command of Diego Salazar, Miguel de Toro, and Luis de Anasco, and sent them out alternately to make sudden surprises and assaults, to form ambuscades, and to practice the other stratagems of partisan warfare, which he had learnt in early life in his campaigns against the Moors of Granada.

One of his most efficient warriors was a dog named Berezillo, renowned for courage, strength and sagacity. It is said that he could distinguish those of the Indians who were allies, from those who were enemies of the Spaniards. To the former he was docile and friendly, to the latter fierce and implacable. He was the terror of the natives, who were unaccustomed to powerful and ferocious animals, and did more service in this wild warfare than could have been rendered by several soldiers. His prowess was so highly appreciated that his master received for him the pay-allowance, and share of booty, assigned to a cross-bow man, which was the highest stipend given.*

At length the stout old cavalier Juan Ponce was reinforced in his strong-hold by troops from Hispaniola, whereupon he sallied forth boldly to take revenge upon those who had thus held him in a kind of durance. His foe Agueybana was at that time encamped in his own territories with more than five thousand warriors, but in a negligent, unwatchful state, for he knew nothing of the reinforcements of the Spaniards, and

* This famous dog was killed some years afterwards by a poisoned arrow, as he was swimming in the sea in pursuit of a Carib Indian. He left, however, a numerous progeny and a great name behind him; and his merits and exploits were long a favourite theme among the Spanish colonists. He was father to the renowned Leoncico, the faithful dog of Vasco Nuñez, which resembled him in looks and equalled him in prowess.

supposed Juan Ponce shut up with his handful of men in Caparra. The old soldier, therefore, took him completely by surprise, and routed him with great slaughter. Indeed, it is said the Indians were struck with a kind of panic when they saw the Spaniards as numerous as ever, notwithstanding the number they had massacred. Their belief in their immortality revived; they fancied that those whom they had slain had returned to life, and they despaired of victory over beings who could thus arise with renovated vigour from the grave.

Various petty actions and skirmishes afterwards took place, in which the Indians were defeated. Agueybana, however, disdained this petty warfare, and stirred up his countrymen to assemble their forces, and by one grand assault to decide the fate of themselves and their island. Juan Ponce received secret tidings of their intent, and of the place where they were assembling. He had at that time barely eighty men at his disposal, but then they were cased in steel and proof against the weapons of the savages. Without stopping to reflect, the high-mettled old cavalier put himself at their head and led them through the forest in quest of the foe.

It was nearly sunset when he came in sight of the Indian camp, and the multitude of warriors assembled there made him pause, and almost repent of his temerity. He was as shrewd, however, as he was hardy and resolute. Ordering some of his men in the advance to skirmish with the enemy, he hastily threw up a slight fortification with the assistance of the rest. When it was finished he withdrew his forces into it and ordered them to keep merely on the defensive. The Indians made repeated attacks, but were as often repulsed with loss. Some of the Spaniards, impatient of this covert warfare, would sally forth in open field with pike and cross-bow, but were called back within the fortification by their wary commander.

The cacique Agueybana was enraged at finding his host of warriors thus baffled and kept at bay by a mere handful of Spaniards. He beheld the night closing in, and feared that in the darkness the enemy would escape. Summoning his choicest warriors round him, therefore, he led the way in a general assault, when, as he approached the fortress, he received a mortal wound from an arquebus and fell dead upon the spot.

The Spaniards were not aware at first of the importance of

the chief whom they had slain. They soon surmised it, however, from the confusion that ensued among the enemy, who bore off the body with great lamentations, and made no further attack.

The wary Juan Ponce took advantage of the evident distress of the foe, to draw off his small forces in the night, happy to get out of the terrible jeopardy into which a rash confidence had betrayed him. Some of his fiery-spirited officers would have kept the field in spite of the overwhelming force of the enemy. "No, no," said the shrewd veteran; "it is better to protract the war than to risk all upon a single battle."

While Juan Ponce de Leon was fighting hard to maintain his sway over the island, his transient dignity was overturned by another power, against which the prowess of the old soldier was of no avail. King Ferdinand had repented of the step he had ill-advisedly taken, in superceding the governor and lieutenant governor, appointed by Don Diego Columbus. He became convinced, though rather tardily, that it was an infringement of the rights of the admiral, and that policy, as well as justice, required him to retract it. When Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, therefore, came prisoners to Spain, he received them graciously, conferred many favors on them to atone for their rough ejection from office, and finally, after some time, sent them back, empowered to resume the command of the island. They were ordered, however, on no account to manifest rancour or ill-will against Juan Ponce de Leon, or to interfere with any property he might hold, either in houses, lands or Indians; but on the contrary, to cultivate the most friendly understanding with him. The king also wrote to the hardy veteran explaining to him, that this restitution of Ceron and Diaz had been determined upon in council, as a mere act of justice due to them, but was not intended as a censure upon his conduct, and that means should be sought to indemnify him for the loss of his command.

By the time the governor and his lieutenant reached the island, Juan Ponce had completed its subjugation. The death of the island champion, the brave Agueybana, had in fact been a death blow to the natives, and shows how much in savage warfare, depends upon a single chieftain. They never made head of war afterwards; but, dispersing among their forests and mountains, fell gradually under the power of the Spaniards. Their subsequent fate was like that of their neighbours of Hayti. They were employed in the labour of the mines,

and in other rude toils so repugnant to their nature that they sank beneath them, and, in a little while, almost all the aboriginals disappeared from the island.

CHAPTER VI.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON HEARS OF A WONDERFUL COUNTRY AND MIRACULOUS FOUNTAIN.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON resigned the command of Porto Rico with tolerable grace. The loss of one wild island and wild government was of little moment, when there was a new world to be shared out, where a bold soldier like himself, with sword and buckler, might readily carve out new fortunes for himself. Beside, he had now amassed wealth to assist him in his plans, and, like many of the early discoverers, his brain was teeming with the most romantic enterprises. He had conceived the idea that there was yet a third world to be discovered, and he hoped to be the first to reach its shores, and thus to secure a renown equal to that of Columbus.

While cogitating these things, and considering which way he should strike forth in the unexplored regions around him, he met with some old Indians who gave him tidings of a country which promised, not merely to satisfy the cravings of his ambition, but to realize the fondest dreams of the poets. They assured him that, far to the north, there existed a land abounding in gold and in all manner of delights; but, above all, possessing a river of such wonderful virtue that whoever bathed in it would be restored to youth! They added, that in times past, before the arrival of the Spaniards, a large party of the natives of Cuba had departed northward in search of this happy land and this river of life, and, having never returned, it was concluded that they were flourishing in renovated youth, detained by the pleasures of that enchanting country.

Here was the dream of the alchymist realized! one had but to find this gifted land and revel in the enjoyment of boundless riches and perennial youth! nay, some of the ancient Indians declared that it was not necessary to go so far in quest of these rejuvenating waters, for that, in a certain island of

the Bahama group, called Bimini, which lay far out in the ocean, there was a fountain possessing the same marvellous and inestimable qualities.

Juan Ponce de Leon listened to these tales with fond credulity. He was advancing in life, and the ordinary term of existence seemed insufficient for his mighty plans. Could he but plunge into this marvellous fountain or gifted river, and come out with his battered, war-worn body restored to the strength and freshness and suppleness of youth, and his head still retaining the wisdom and knowledge of age, what enterprises might he not accomplish in the additional course of vigorous years insured to him!

It may seem incredible, at the present day, that a man of years and experience could yield any faith to a story which resembles the wild fiction of an Arabian tale; but the wonders and novelties breaking upon the world in that age of discovery almost realized the illusions of fable, and the imaginations of the Spanish voyagers had become so heated that they were capable of any stretch of credulity.

So fully persuaded was the worthy old cavalier of the existence of the region described to him, that he fitted out three ships at his own expense to prosecute the discovery, nor had he any difficulty in finding adventurers in abundance ready to cruise with him in quest of this fairy-land.*

* It was not the credulous minds of voyagers and adventurers alone that were heated by these Indian traditions and romantic fables. Men of learning and eminence were likewise beguiled by them: witness the following extract from the second decade of *I eter Martyr*, addressed to Leo X., then Bishop of Rome:

"Among the islands on the north side of Hispaniola there is one about 325 leagues distant, as they say which have searched the same, in the which is a continual spring of running water, of such marvellous virtue that the water thereof being drunk, perhaps with some diet, maketh olde men young again. And here I must make protestation to your holiness not to think this to be said lightly or rashly, for they have so spread this rumour for a truth throughout all the court, that not only all the people, but also many of them whom wisdom or fortune hath divided from the common sort, think it to be true; but, if you will ask my opinion herein, I will answer that I will not attribute so great power to nature, but that God hath no lesse reserved this prerogative to himself than to search the hearts of men." &c.—*P. Martyr, D. 2. c. 10, Lok's translation.*

CHAPTER VII.

CRUISE OF JUAN PONCE DE LEON IN SEARCH OF THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.—1512.

It was on the third of March, 1512, that Juan Ponce sailed with his three ships from the Port of St. Germain in the island of Porto Rico. He kept for some distance along the coast of Hispaniola, and then, stretching away to the northward, made for the Bahama islands, and soon fell in with the first of the group. He was favoured with propitious weather and tranquil seas, and glided smoothly with wind and current along that verdant archipelago, visiting one island after another, until, on the fourteenth of the month, he arrived at Guanahani, or St. Salvador's, where Christopher Columbus had first put his foot on the shores of the new world. His inquiries for the island of Bimini were all in vain, and as to the fountain of youth, he may have drank of every fountain and river, and lake of the archipelago, even to the salt pools of Turk's island, without being a whit the younger.

Still he was not discouraged; but, having repaired his ships, he again put to sea and shaped his course to the north-west. On Sunday, the 27th of March, he came in sight of what he supposed to be an island, but was prevented from landing by adverse weather. He continued hovering about it for several days, buffeted by the elements, until, in the night of the second of April, he succeeded in coming to anchor under the land in thirty degrees eight minutes of latitude. The whole country was in the fresh bloom of spring; the trees were gay with blossoms, and the fields covered with flowers; from which circumstance, as well as from having discovered it on Palm Sunday, (*Pascua Florida*,) he gave it the name of Florida, which it retains to the present day. The Indian name of the country was *Cautio*.*

Juan Ponce landed, and took possession of the country in the name of the Castilian Sovereigns. He afterwards continued for several weeks ranging the coasts of this flowery land, and struggling against the gulf-stream and the various currents which sweep it. He doubled Cape Cañaveral, and reconnoitered the southern and eastern shores without suspect-

* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* d. 1. l. ix. c. 10.

ing that this was a part of Terra Firma. In all his attempts to explore the country, he met with resolute and implacable hostility on the part of the natives, who appeared to be a fierce and warlike race. He was disappointed also in his hopes of finding gold, nor did any of the rivers or fountains which he examined possess the rejuvenating virtue. Convinced, therefore, that this was not the promised land of Indian tradition, he turned his prow homeward on the 14th of June, with the intention in the way of making one more attempt to find the island of Bimini.

In the outset of his return he discovered a group of islets abounding with sea-fowl and marine animals. On one of them his sailors, in the course of a single night, caught one hundred and seventy turtles, and might have taken many more, had they been so inclined. They likewise took fourteen sea wolves, and killed a vast quantity of pelicans and other birds. To this group Juan Ponce gave the name of the Tortugas, or turtles, which they still retain.

Proceeding in his cruise, he touched at another group of islets near the Lucayos, to which he gave the name of La Vieja, or the Old Woman group, because he found no inhabitant there but one old Indian woman.* This ancient sybil he took on board his ship to give him information about the labyrinth of islands into which he was entering, and perhaps he could not have had a more suitable guide in the eccentric quest he was making. Notwithstanding her pilotage, however, he was exceedingly baffled and perplexed in his return voyage among the Bahama islands, for he was forcing his way as it were against the course of nature, and encountering the currents which sweep westward along these islands, and the trade-wind which accompanies them. For a long time he struggled with all kinds of difficulties and dangers; and was obliged to remain upwards of a month in one of the islands to repair the damages which his ship had suffered in a storm.

Disheartened at length by the perils and trials with which nature seemed to have beset the approach to Bimini, as to some fairy island in romance, he gave up the quest in person, and sent in his place a trusty captain, Juan Perez de Ortubia, who departed in one of the other ships, guided by the experienced old woman of the isles, and by another Indian. As to Juan Ponce, he made the best of his way back to Porto

* Herrera, d. 1, l. ix.

Rico, where he arrived infinitely poorer in purse and wrinkled in brow, by this cruise after inexhaustible riches and perpetual youth.

He had not been long in port when his trusty envoy, Juan Perez, likewise arrived. Guided by the sage old woman, he had succeeded in finding the long-sought-for Bimini. He described it as being large, verdant, and covered with beautiful groves. There were crystal springs and limpid streams in abundance, which kept the island in perpetual verdure, but none that could restore to an old man the vernal greenness of his youth.

Thus ended the romantic expedition of Juan Ponce de Leon. Like many other pursuits of a chimera, it terminated in the acquisition of a substantial good. Though he had failed in finding the fairy fountain of youth, he had discovered in place of it the important country of Florida.*

CHAPTER VIII.

EXPEDITION OF JUAN PONCE AGAINST THE CARIBS—HIS DEATH.— (1514.)

JUAN PONCE DE LEON now repaired to Spain to make a report of his voyage to King Ferdinand. The hardy old cavalier experienced much raillery from the wittlings of the court on account of his visionary voyage, though many wise men had been as credulous as himself at the outset. The king, however, received him with great favour, and conferred on him the title of Adelantado of Bimini and Florida, which last was as yet considered an island. Permission was also granted him to recruit men either in Spain or in the colonies for a set-

* The belief of the existence, in Florida, of a river like that sought by Juan Ponce, was long prevalent among the Indians of Cuba, and the caciques were anxious to discover it. That a party of the natives of Cuba once went in search of it, and remained there, appears to be a fact, as their descendants were afterwards to be traced among the people of Florida. Las Casas says, that even in his days, many persisted in seeking this mystery, and some thought that the river was no other than that called the Jordan, at the point of St. Helena; without considering that the name was given to it by the Spaniards in the year 1520, when they discovered the land of Chicora.

tlement in Florida; but he deferred entering on his command for the present, being probably discouraged and impoverished by the losses in his last expedition, or finding a difficulty in enlisting adventurers. At length another enterprise presented itself. The caribs had by this time become a terror to the Spanish inhabitants of many of the islands, making descents upon the coasts and carrying off captives, who it was supposed were doomed to be devoured by these cannibals. So frequent were their invasions of the island of Porto Rico, that it was feared they would ultimately oblige the Spaniards to abandon it.

At length King Ferdinand, in 1514, ordered that three ships, well armed and manned, should be fitted out in Seville, destined to scour the islands of the Caribs, and to free the seas from those cannibal marauders. The command of the Armada was given to Juan Ponce de Leon, from his knowledge in Indian warfare, and his varied and rough experience which had mingled in him the soldier with the sailor. He was instructed in the first place to assail the Caribs of those islands most contiguous and dangerous to Porto Rico, and then to make war on those of the coast of Terra Firma, in the neighbourhood of Carthagena. He was afterwards to take the captaincy of Porto Rico, and to attend to the repartimientos or distributions of the Indians in conjunction with a person to be appointed by Diego Columbus.

The enterprise suited the soldier-like spirit of Juan Ponce de Leon, and the gallant old cavalier set sail full of confidence in January, 1515, and steered direct for the Caribbees, with a determination to give a wholesome castigation to the whole savage archipelago. Arriving at the island of Guadaloupe, he cast anchor, and sent men on shore for wood and water, and women to wash the clothing of the crews, with a party of soldiers to mount guard.

Juan Ponce had not been as wary as usual, or he had to deal with savages unusually adroit in warfare. While the people were scattered carelessly on shore, the Caribs rushed forth from an ambuscade, killed the greater part of the men, and carried off the women to the mountains.

This blow at the very outset of his vaunted expedition sank deep into the heart of Juan Ponce, and put an end to all his military excitement. Humbled and mortified, he set sail for the island of Porto Rico, where he relinquished all further prosecution of the enterprise, under pretext of ill health, and

gave the command of the squadron to a captain named Zuñiga; but it is surmised that his malady was not so much of the flesh as of the spirit. He remained in Porto Rico as governor; but, having grown testy and irritable through vexations and disappointments, he gave great offence, and caused much contention on the island by positive and strong-handed measures, in respect to the distribution of the Indians.

He continued for several years in that island, in a state of grovelling repose, until the brilliant exploits of Hernando Cortez, which threatened to eclipse the achievements of all the veteran discoverers, roused his dormant spirit.

Jealous of being cast in the shade in his old days, he determined to sally forth on one more expedition. He had heard that Florida, which he had discovered, and which he had hitherto considered a mere island, was part of Terra Firma, possessing vast and unknown regions in its bosom. If so, a grand field of enterprise lay before him, wherein he might make discoveries and conquests to rival, if not surpass, the far-famed conquest of Mexico.

Accordingly, in the year 1521 he fitted out two ships at the island of Porto Rico, and embarked almost the whole of his property in the undertaking. His voyage was toilsome and tempestuous, but at length he arrived at the wished-for land. He made a descent upon the coast with a great part of his men, but the Indians sallied forth with unusual valour to defend their shores. A bloody battle ensued, several of the Spaniards were slain, and Juan Ponce was wounded by an arrow, in the thigh. He was borne on board his ship, and finding himself disabled for further action, set sail for Cuba, where he arrived ill in body and dejected in heart.

He was of an age when there is no longer prompt and healthful reaction either mental or corporeal. The irritations of humiliated pride and disappointed hope, exasperated the fever of his wound, and he died soon after his arrival at the island. "Thus fate," says one of the quaint old Spanish writers, "delights to reverse the schemes of man. The discovery that Juan Ponce flattered himself was to lead to a means of perpetuating his life, had the ultimate effect of hastening his death."

It may be said, however, that he has at least attained the shadow of his desire, since, though disappointed in extending the natural term of his existence, his discovery has ensured a lasting duration to his name.

The following epitaph was inscribed upon his tomb, which does justice to the warrior qualities of the stout old cavalier:

Mole sub hac fortis requiescat ossa Leonis,
Qui vicit factis nomina magna suis.

It has thus been paraphrased in Spanish by the Licentiate Juan de Castellanos.

Aqueste lugar estrecho
Es sepulchro del varon,
Que en el nombre fue Leon,
Y mucho mas en el hecho.

“In this sepulchre rest the bones of a man, who was a lion by name, and still more by nature.”

APPENDIX.

A VISIT TO PALOS.

[The following narrative was actually commenced, by the author of this work, as a letter to a friend, but unexpectedly swelled to its present size. He has been induced to insert it here from the idea that many will feel the same curiosity to know something of the present state of Palos and its inhabitants that led him to make the journey.]

SEVILLE, 1828.

SINCE I last wrote to you I have made, what I may term, an American Pilgrimage, to visit the little port of Palos in Andalusia, where Columbus fitted out his ships, and whence he sailed for the discovery of the New World. Need I tell you how deeply interesting and gratifying it has been to me? I had long meditated this excursion as a kind of pious, and, if I may say, filial duty of an American, and my intention was quickened when I learnt that many of the edifices mentioned in the history of Columbus still remained in nearly the same state in which they existed at the time of his sojourn at Palos, and that the descendants of the intrepid Pinzons, who aided him with ships and money, and sailed with him in the great voyage of discovery, still flourished in the neighbourhood.

The very evening before my departure from Seville on the excursion, I heard that there was a young gentleman of the Pinzon family studying law in the city. I got introduced to him, and found him of most prepossessing appearance and manners. He gave me a letter of introduction to his father, Don Juan Fernandez Pinzon, resident of Moguer, and the present head of the family.

As it was in the middle of August, and the weather intensely hot, I hired a calesa for the journey. This is a two-wheeled carriage, resembling a cabriolet; but of the most primitive and rude construction; the harness is profusely ornamented with brass, and the horse's head decorated with

tufts and tassels and dangling bobs of scarlet and yellow worsted. I had, for calasero, a tall, long-legged Andalusian, in short jacket, little round-crowned hat, breeches decorated with buttons from the hip to the knees, and a pair of russet leather bottinas or spatter-dashes. He was an active fellow, though uncommonly taciturn for an Andalusian, and strode along beside his horse, rousing him occasionally to greater speed by a loud malediction or a hearty thwack of his cudgel.

In this style I set off late in the day to avoid the noon-tide heat, and after ascending the lofty range of hills that borders the great valley of the Guadalquivir, and having a rough ride among their heights, I descended about twilight into one of those vast, silent, melancholy plains, frequent in Spain, where I beheld no other signs of life than a roaming flock of bustards, and a distant herd of cattle, guarded by a solitary herdsman, who, with a long pike planted in the earth, stood motionless in the midst of the dreary landscape, resembling an Arab of the desert. The night had somewhat advanced when we stopped to repose for a few hours at a solitary venta or inn, if it might so be called, being nothing more than a vast low-roofed stable, divided into several compartments for the reception of the troops of mules and arrieros (or carriers) who carry on the internal trade of Spain. Accommodation for the traveller there was none—not even for a traveller so easily accommodated as myself. The landlord had no food to give me, and as to a bed, he had none but a horse cloth, on which his only child, a boy of eight years old, lay naked on the earthen floor. Indeed the heat of the weather and the fumes from the stables made the interior of the hovel insupportable, so I was fain to bivouac on my cloak on the pavement at the door of the venta, where on waking after two or three hours of sound sleep, I found a contrabandista (or smuggler) snoring beside me, with his blunderbuss on his arm.

I resumed my journey before break of day, and had made several leagues by ten o'clock, when we stopped to breakfast and to pass the sultry hours of midday in a large village, from whence we departed about four o'clock, and, after passing through the same kind of solitary country, arrived just after sunset at Moguer. This little city (for at present it is a city) is situated about a league from Palos, of which place it has gradually absorbed all the respectable inhabitants, and, among the number, the whole family of the Pinzons.

So remote is this little place from the stir and bustle of

travel, and so destitute of the show and vain-glory of this world, that my calesa, as it rattled and jingled along the narrow and ill-paved streets, caused a great sensation; the children shouted and scampered along by its side, admiring its splendid trappings of brass and worsted, and gazing with reverence at the important stranger who came in so gorgeous an equipage.

I drove up to the principal posada, the landlord of which was at the door. He was one of the very civilest men in the world, and disposed to do every thing in his power to make me comfortable; there was only one difficulty, he had neither bed nor bedroom in his house. In fact, it was a mere venta for muleteers, who are accustomed to sleep on the ground with their mule-cloths for beds and pack-saddles for pillows. It was a hard case, but there was no better posada in the place. Few people travel for pleasure or curiosity in these out-of-the-way parts of Spain, and those of any note are generally received into private houses. I had travelled sufficiently in Spain to find out that a bed, after all, is not an article of indispensable necessity, and was about to bespeak some quiet corner where I might spread my cloak, when, fortunately, the landlord's wife came forth. She could not have a more obliging disposition than her husband, but then—God bless the women!—they always know how to carry their good wishes into effect. In a little while a small room about ten feet square, that had formed a thoroughfare between the stables and a kind of shop or bar-room, was cleared of a variety of lumber, and I was assured that a bed should be put up there for me. From the consultations I saw my hostess holding with some of her neighbour gossips, I fancied the bed was to be a kind of piecemeal contribution among them for the credit of the house.

As soon as I could change my dress, I commenced the historical researches, which were the object of my journey, and inquired for the abode of Don Juan Fernandez Pinzon. My obliging landlord himself volunteered to conduct me thither, and I set off full of animation at the thoughts of meeting with the lineal representative of one of the coadjutors of Columbus.

A short walk brought us to the house, which was most respectable in its appearance, indicating easy if not affluent circumstances. The door, as is customary in Spanish villages during summer, stood wide open. We entered with the usual salutation, or rather summons, "Ave Maria!" A trim Anda-

lusian handmaid answered to the call, and, on our inquiring for the master of the house, led the way across a little patio or court in the centre of the edifice, cooled by a fountain surrounded by shrubs and flowers, to a back court or terrace, likewise set out with flowers, where Don Juan Fernandez was seated with his family enjoying the serene evening in the open air.

I was much pleased with his appearance. He was a venerable old gentleman, tall and somewhat thin, with fair complexion and gray hair. He received me with great urbanity, and, on reading the letter from his son, appeared struck with surprise to find I had come quite to Moguer merely to visit the scene of the embarkation of Columbus; and still more so on my telling him that one of my leading objects of curiosity was his own family connexion; for it would seem that the worthy cavalier had troubled his head but little about the enterprises of his ancestors.

I now took my seat in the domestic circle and soon felt myself quite at home, for there is generally a frankness in the hospitality of Spaniards that soon puts a stranger at his ease beneath their roof. The wife of Don Fernandez was extremely amiable and affable, possessing much of that natural aptness for which the Spanish women are remarkable. In the course of conversation with them, I learnt that Don Juan Fernandez, who is seventy-two years of age, is the eldest of five brothers, all of whom are married, have numerous offspring, and lived in Moguer and its vicinity in nearly the same condition and rank of life as at the time of the discovery. This agreed with what I had previously heard respecting the families of the discoverers. Of Columbus no lineal and direct descendant exists; his was an exotic stock that never took deep and lasting root in the country; but the race of the Pinzons continues to thrive and multiply in its native soil.

While I was yet conversing a gentleman entered, who was introduced to me as Don Luis Fernandez Pinzon, the youngest of the brothers. He appeared to be between fifty and sixty years of age, somewhat robust, with fair complexion and gray hair, and a frank and manly deportment. He is the only one of the present generation that has followed the ancient profession of the family; having served with great applause as an officer of the royal navy, from which he retired on his marriage about twenty-two years since. He is the one also who

takes the greatest interest and pride in the historical honours of his house, carefully preserving all the legends and documents of the achievements and distinctions of his family, a manuscript volume of which he lent me for my inspection.

Don Juan now expressed a wish that during my residence in Moguer I would make his house my home. I endeavoured to excuse myself, alleging that the good people at the posada had been at such extraordinary trouble in preparing quarters for me that I did not like to disappoint them. The worthy old gentleman undertook to arrange all this, and, while supper was preparing, we walked together to the posada. I found that my obliging host and hostess had indeed exerted themselves to an uncommon degree. An old ricketty table had been spread out in a corner of the little room as a bedstead, on top of which was propped up a grand *cama de luxo*, or state bed, which appeared to be the admiration of the house. I could not for the soul of me appear to undervalue what the poor people had prepared with such hearty good-will and considered such a triumph of art and luxury; so I again entreated Don Juan to dispense with my sleeping at his house, promising most faithfully to make my meals there while I should stay at Moguer, and, as the old gentleman understood my motives for declining his invitation and felt a good-humoured sympathy in them, we readily arranged the matter. I returned, therefore, with Don Juan to his house and supped with his family. During the repast a plan was agreed upon for my visit to Palos and to the convent La Rabida, in which Don Juan volunteered to accompany me and be my guide, and the following day was allotted to the expedition. We were to breakfast at a hacienda or country-seat which he possessed in the vicinity of Palos in the midst of his vineyards, and were to dine there on our return from the convent. These arrangements being made, we parted for the night; I returned to the posada highly gratified with my visit, and slept soundly in the extraordinary bed, which, I may almost say, had been invented for my accommodation.

On the following morning, bright and early, Don Juan Fernandez and myself set off in the calesa for Palos. I felt apprehensive at first, that the kind-hearted old gentleman, in his anxiety to oblige, had left his bed at too early an hour, and was exposing himself to fatigues unsuited to his age. He laughed at the idea, and assured me that he was an early riser, and accustomed to all kinds of exercise on horse and foot,

being a keen sportsman, and frequently passing days together among the mountains on shooting expeditions, taking with him servants, horses, and provisions, and living in a tent. He appeared, in fact, to be of an active habit, and to possess a youthful vivacity of spirit. His cheerful disposition rendered our morning drive extremely agreeable; his urbanity was shown to every one whom we met on the road; even the common peasant was saluted by him with the appellation of *caballero*, a mark of respect ever gratifying to the poor but proud Spaniard, when yielded by a superior.

As the tide was out we drove along the flat grounds bordering the Tinto. The river was on our right, while on our left was a range of hills, jutting out into promontories, one beyond the other, and covered with vineyards and fig trees. The weather was serene, the air was soft and balmy, and the landscape of that gentle kind calculated to put one in a quiet and happy humour. We passed close by the skirts of Palos, and drove to the hacienda, which is situated at some little distance from the village, between it and the river. The house is a low stone building, well white-washed, and of great length; one end being fitted up as a summer residence, with saloons, bed-rooms, and a domestic chapel; and the other as a bodega or magazine for the reception of the wine produced on the estate.

The house stands on a hill, amidst vineyards, which are supposed to cover a part of the site of the ancient town of Palos, now shrunk to a miserable village. Beyond these vineyards, on the crest of a distant hill, are seen the white walls of the convent of La Rabida rising above a dark wood of pine trees.

Below the hacienda flows the river Tinto, on which Columbus embarked. It is divided by a low tongue of land, or rather the sand-bar of Saltes, from the river Odiel, with which it soon mingles its waters, and flows on to the ocean. Beside this sand-bar, where the channel of the river runs deep, the squadron of Columbus was anchored, and from hence he made sail on the morning of his departure.

The soft breeze that was blowing scarcely ruffled the surface of this beautiful river; two or three picturesque barks, called mysticks, with long latine sails, were gliding down it. A little aid of the imagination might suffice to picture them as the light caravels of Columbus, sailing forth on their eventful expedition, while the distant bells of the town of Huelva, which were ringing melodiously, might be supposed as cheering the voyagers with a farewell peal.

I cannot express to you what were my feelings on treading the shore which had once been animated by the bustle of departure, and whose sands had been printed by the last footstep of Columbus. The solemn and sublime nature of the event that had followed, together with the fate and fortunes of those concerned in it, filled the mind with vague yet melancholy ideas. It was like viewing the silent and empty stage of some great drama, when all the actors had departed. The very aspect of the landscape, so tranquilly beautiful, had an effect upon me, and as I paced the deserted shore by the side of a descendant of one of the discoverers, I felt my heart swelling with emotions and my eyes filling with tears.

What surprised me was to find no semblance of a seaport; there was neither wharf nor landing-place—nothing but a naked river bank, with the hulk of a ferry-boat, which I was told carried passengers to Huelva, lying high and dry on the sands, deserted by the tide. Palos, though it has doubtless dwindled away from its former size, can never have been important as to extent and population. If it possessed warehouses on the beach, they have disappeared. It is at present a mere village of the poorest kind, and lies nearly a quarter of a mile from the river, in a hollow among hills. It contains a few hundred inhabitants, who subsist principally by labouring in the fields and vineyards. Its race of merchants and mariners are extinct. There are no vessels belonging to the place, nor any show of traffic, excepting at the season of fruit and wine, when a few mysticks and other light barks anchor in the river to collect the produce of the neighbourhood. The people are totally ignorant, and it is probable that the greater part of them scarce know even the name of America. Such is the place from whence sallied forth the enterprise for the discovery of the western world!

We were now summoned to breakfast in a little saloon of the hacienda. The table was covered with natural luxuries produced upon the spot—fine purple and muscatel grapes from the adjacent vineyard, delicious melons from the garden, and generous wines made on the estate. The repast was heightened by the genial manners of my hospitable host, who appeared to possess the most enviable cheerfulness of spirit and simplicity of heart.

After breakfast we set off in the calesa to visit the convent of La Rabida, which is about half a league distant. The road, for a part of the way, lay through the vineyards, and was deep

and sandy. The calasero had been at his wits' end to conceive what motive a stranger like myself, apparently travelling for mere amusement, could have in coming so far to see so miserable a place as Palos, which he set down as one of the very poorest places in the whole world; but this additional toil and struggle through deep sand to visit the old Convent of La Rabida, completed his confusion—"Hombre!" exclaimed he, "es una ruina! no hay mas que dos frailes!"—"Zounds! why, it's a ruin! there are only two friars there!" Don Juan laughed, and told him that I had come all the way from Seville precisely to see that old ruin and those two friars. The calasero made the Spaniard's last reply when he is perplexed—he shrugged his shoulders and crossed himself.

After ascending a hill and passing through the skirts of a straggling pine wood, we arrived in front of the convent. It stands in a bleak and solitary situation, on the brow of a rocky height or promontory, overlooking to the west a wide range of sea and land, bounded by the frontier mountains of Portugal, about eight leagues distant. The convent is shut out from a view of the vineyard of Palos by the gloomy forest of pines which I have mentioned, which cover the promontory to the east, and darken the whole landscape in that direction.

There is nothing remarkable in the architecture of the convent; part of it is Gothic, but the edifice, having been frequently repaired, and being white-washed, according to a universal custom in Andalusia, inherited from the Moors, it has not that venerable aspect which might be expected from its antiquity.

We alighted at the gate where Columbus, when a poor pedestrian, a stranger in the land, asked bread and water for his child! As long as the convent stands, this must be a spot calculated to awaken the most thrilling interest. The gate remains apparently in nearly the same state as at the time of his visit, but there is no longer a porter at hand to administer to the wants of the wayfarer. The door stood wide open, and admitted us into a small court-yard. From thence we passed through a Gothic portal into the chapel, without seeing a human being. We then traversed two interior cloisters, equally vacant and silent, and bearing a look of neglect and dilapidation. From an open window we had a peep at what had once been a garden, but that had also gone to ruin; the walls were broken and thrown down; a few shrubs, and a scattered fig-tree or two, were all the traces of cultivation that

remained. We passed through the long dormitories, but the cells were shut up and abandoned; we saw no living thing except a solitary cat stealing across a distant corridor, which fled in a panic at the unusual sight of strangers. At length, after patrolling nearly the whole of the empty building to the echo of our own footsteps, we came to where the door of a cell, being partly open, gave us the sight of a monk within, seated at a table writing. He rose and received us with much civility, and conducted us to the superior, who was reading in an adjacent cell. They were both rather young men, and, together with a novitiate and a lay-brother, who officiated as cook, formed the whole community of the convent.

Don Juan Fernandez communicated to them the object of my visit, and my desire also to inspect the archives of the convent to find if there was any record of the sojourn of Columbus. They informed us that the archives had been entirely destroyed by the French. The younger monk, however, who had perused them, had a vague recollection of various particulars concerning the transactions of Columbus at Palos, his visit to the convent, and the sailing of his expedition. From all that he cited, however, it appeared to me that all the information on the subject contained in the archives, had been extracted from Herrera and other well known authors. The monk was talkative and eloquent, and soon diverged from the subject of Columbus, to one which he considered of infinitely greater importance;—the miraculous image of the Virgin possessed by their convent, and known by the name of "Our Lady of La Rabida." He gave us a history of the wonderful way in which the image had been found buried in the earth, where it had lain hidden for ages, since the time of the conquest of Spain by the Moors; the disputes between the convent and different places in the neighbourhood for the possession of it; the marvellous protection it extended to the adjacent country, especially in preventing all madness, either in man or dog, for this malady was anciently so prevalent in this place as to gain it the appellation of La Rabia, by which it was originally called; a name which, thanks to the beneficent influence of the Virgin, it no longer merited or retained. Such are the legends and reliques with which every convent in Spain is enriched, which are zealously cried up by the monks, and devoutly credited by the populace.

Twice a year on the festival of our Lady of La Rabida, and

on that of the patron saint of the order, the solitude and silence of the convent are interrupted by the intrusion of a swarming multitude, composed of the inhabitants of Moguer, of Huelva, and the neighbouring plains and mountains. The open esplanade in front of the edifice resembles a fair, the adjacent forest teems with the motley throng, and the image of our Lady of La Rabida is borne forth in triumphant procession.

While the friar was thus dilating upon the merits and renown of the image, I amused myself with those day dreams, or conjurings of the imagination to which I am a little given. As the internal arrangements of convents are apt to be the same from age to age, I pictured to myself this chamber as the same inhabited by the guardian, Juan Perez de Marchena, at the time of the visit of Columbus. Why might not the old and ponderous table before me be the very one on which he displayed his conjectural maps, and expounded his theory of a western route to India? It required but another stretch of the imagination to assemble the little conclave around the table; Juan Perez the friar, Garci Fernandez the physician, and Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the bold navigator, all listening with rapt attention to Columbus, or to the tale of some old seaman of Palos, about islands seen in the western parts of the ocean.

The friars, as far as their poor means and scanty knowledge extended, were disposed to do every thing to promote the object of my visit. They showed us all parts of the convent, which, however, has little to boast of, excepting the historical associations connected with it. The library was reduced to a few volumes, chiefly on ecclesiastical subjects, piled promiscuously in the corner of a vaulted chamber, and covered with dust. The chamber itself was curious, being the most ancient part of the edifice, and supposed to have formed part of a temple in the time of the Romans.

We ascended to the roof of the convent to enjoy the extensive prospect it commands. Immediately below the promontory on which it is situated, runs a narrow but tolerably deep river, called the Domingo Rubio, which empties itself into the Tinto. It is the opinion of Don Luis Fernandez Pinzon, that the ships of Columbus were careened and fitted out in this river, as it affords better shelter than the Tinto, and its shores are not so shallow. A lonely bark of a fisherman was lying in this stream, and not far off, on a sandy

point, were the ruins of an ancient watchtower. From the roof of the convent, all the windings of the Odiel and the Tinto were to be seen, and their junction into the main stream, by which Columbus sallied forth to sea. In fact, the convent serves as a landmark, being, from its lofty and solitary situation, visible for a considerable distance to vessels coming on the coast. On the opposite side I looked down upon the lonely road, through the wood of pine trees, by which the zealous guardian of the convent, Fray Juan Perez, departed at midnight on his mule, when he sought the camp of Ferdinand and Isabella in the Vega of Granada, to plead the project of Columbus before the queen.

Having finished our inspection of the convent, we prepared to depart, and were accompanied to the outward portal by the two friars. Our calasero brought his rattling and rickety vehicle for us to mount; at sight of which one of the monks exclaimed, with a smile, "Santa Maria! only to think! A calesa before the gate of the convent of La Rabida!" And, indeed, so solitary and remote is this ancient edifice, and so simple is the mode of living of the people in this bye corner of Spain, that the appearance of even a sorry calesa might well cause astonishment. It is only singular that in such a bye-corner the scheme of Columbus should have found intelligent listeners and coadjutors, after it had been discarded, almost with scoffing and contempt, from learned universities and splendid courts.

On our way back to the hacienda, we met Don Rafael, a younger son of Don Juan Fernandez, a fine young man about twenty-one years of age, and who, his father informed me, was at present studying French and mathematics. He was well mounted on a spirited gray horse, and dressed in the Andalusian style, with the little round hat and jacket. He sat his horse gracefully, and managed him well. I was pleased with the frank and easy terms on which Don Juan appeared to live with his children. This I was inclined to think his favourite son, as I understood he was the only one that partook of the old gentleman's fondness for the chase, and that accompanied him in his hunting excursions.

A dinner had been prepared for us at the hacienda, by the wife of the capitaz, or overseer, who, with her husband, seemed to be well pleased with this visit from Don Juan, and I was confident of receiving a pleasant answer from the good-humoured old gentleman whenever they addressed him. The

dinner was served up about two o'clock, and was a most agreeable meal. The fruits and wines were from the estate, and were excellent; the rest of the provisions were from Moguer, for the adjacent village of Palos is too poor to furnish anything. A gentle breeze from the sea played through the hall, and tempered the summer heat. Indeed I do not know when I have seen a more enviable spot than this country retreat of the Pinzons. Its situation on a breezy hill, at no great distance from the sea, and in a southern climate, produces a happy temperature, neither hot in summer nor cold in winter. It commands a beautiful prospect, and is surrounded by natural luxuries. The country abounds with game, the adjacent river affords abundant sport in fishing, both by day and night, and delightful excursions for those fond of sailing. During the busy seasons of rural life, and especially at the joyous period of vintage, the family pass some time here, accompanied by numerous guests, at which times, Don Juan assured me, there was no lack of amusements, both by land and water.

When we had dined, and taken the siesta, or afternoon nap, according to the Spanish custom in summer-time, we set out on our return to Moguer, visiting the village of Palos in the way. Don Gabriel had been sent in advance to procure the keys of the village church, and to apprise the curate of our wish to inspect the archives. The village consists principally of two streets of low white-washed houses. Many of the inhabitants have very dark complexions, betraying a mixture of African blood.

On entering the village, we repaired to the lowly mansion of the curate. I had hoped to find him some such personage as the curate in Don Quixote, possessed of shrewdness and information in his limited sphere, and that I might gain some anecdotes from him concerning his parish, its worthies, its antiquities, and its historical events. Perhaps I might have done so at any other time, but, unfortunately, the curate was something of a sportsman, and had heard of some game among the neighbouring hills. We met him just sallying forth from his house, and, I must confess, his appearance was picturesque. He was a short, broad, sturdy little man, and had doffed his cassock and broad clerical beaver for a short jacket and a little round Andalusian hat; he had his gun in hand, and was on the point of mounting a donkey which had been led forth by an ancient withered handmaid. Fearful of

being detained from his foray, he accosted my companion the moment he came in sight. "God preserve you, Senor Don Juan! I have received your message, and have but one answer to make. The archives have all been destroyed. We have no trace of any thing you seek for—nothing—nothing—Don Rafael has the keys of the church. You can examine it at your leisure.—Adios, caballero!" With these words the galliard little curate mounted his donkey, thumped his ribs with the butt end of his gun, and trotted off to the hills.

In our way to the church we passed by the ruins of what had once been a fair and spacious dwelling, greatly superior to the other houses of the village. This, Don Juan informed me, was an old family possession, but since they had removed from Palos it had fallen to decay for want of a tenant. It was probably the family residence of Martin Alonzo or Vicente Yañez Pinzon, in the time of Columbus.

We now arrived at the church of St. George, in the porch of which Columbus first proclaimed to the inhabitants of Palos the order of the sovereigns, that they should furnish him with ships for his great voyage of discovery. This edifice has lately been thoroughly repaired, and, being of solid mason work, promises to stand for ages, a monument of the discoverers. It stands outside of the village, on the brow of a hill, looking along a little valley toward the river. The remains of a Moorish arch prove it to have been a mosque in former times; just above it, on the crest of the hill, is the ruin of a Moorish castle.

I paused in the porch and endeavoured to recall the interesting scene that had taken place there, when Columbus, accompanied by the zealous friar, Juan Perez, caused the public notary to read the royal order in presence of the astonished *alcaldes*, *regidores*, and *alguazils*; but it is difficult to conceive the consternation that must have been struck into so remote a little community, by this sudden apparition of an entire stranger among them, bearing a command that they should put their persons and ships at his disposal, and sail with him away into the unknown wilderness of the ocean.

The interior of the church has nothing remarkable, excepting a wooden image of St. George vanquishing the Dragon, which is erected over the high altar, and is the admiration of the good people of Palos, who bear it about the streets in grand procession on the anniversary of the saint. This group existed in the time of Columbus, and now flourishes in

renovated youth and splendour, having been newly painted and gilded, and the countenance of the saint rendered peculiarly blooming and lustrous.

Having finished the examination of the church, we resumed our seats in the calesa and returned to Moguer. One thing only remained to fulfil the object of my pilgrimage. This was to visit the chapel of the Convent of Santa Clara. When Columbus was in danger of being lost in a tempest on his way home from his great voyage of discovery, he made a vow, that should he be spared, he would watch and pray one whole night in this chapel; a vow which he doubtless fulfilled immediately after his arrival.

My kind and attentive friend, Don Juan, conducted me to the convent. It is the wealthiest in Moguer, and belongs to a sisterhood of Franciscan nuns. The chapel is large, and ornamented with some degree of richness, particularly the part about the high altar, which is embellished by magnificent monuments of the brave family of the Puerto Carreros, the ancient lords of Moguer, and renowned in Moorish warfare. The alabaster effigies of distinguished warriors of that house, and of their wives and sisters, lie side by side, with folded hands, on tombs immediately before the altar, while others recline in deep niches on either side. The night had closed in by the time I entered the church, which made the scene more impressive. A few votive lamps shed a dim light about the interior; their beams were feebly reflected by the gilded work of the high altar, and the frames of the surrounding paintings, and rested upon the marble figures of the warriors and dames lying in the monumental repose of ages. The solemn pile must have presented much the same appearance when the pious discoverer performed his vigil, kneeling before this very altar, and praying and watching throughout the night, and pouring forth heart-felt praises for having been spared to accomplish his sublime discovery.

I had now completed the main purpose of my journey, having visited the various places connected with the story of Columbus. It was highly gratifying to find some of them so little changed, though so great a space of time had intervened; but in this quiet nook of Spain, so far removed from the main thoroughfares, the lapse of time produces but few violent revolutions. Nothing, however, had surprised and gratified me more than the continued stability of the Pinzon family. On the morning after my excursion to Palos, chance gave me

an opportunity of seeing something of the interior of most of their households. Having a curiosity to visit the remains of a Moorish castle, once the citadel of Moguer, Don Fernandez undertook to show me a tower which served as a magazine of wine to one of the Pinzon family. In seeking for the key we were sent from house to house of nearly the whole connexion. All appeared to be living in that golden mean equally removed from the wants and superfluities of life, and all to be happily interwoven by kind and cordial habits of intimacy. We found the females of the family generally seated in the patios, or central courts of their dwellings, beneath the shade of awnings and among shrubs and flowers. Here the Andalusian ladies are accustomed to pass their mornings at work, surrounded by their handmaids, in the primitive, or rather, oriental style. In the porches of some of the houses I observed the coat of arms, granted to the family by Charles V., hung up like a picture in a frame. Over the door of Don Luis, the naval officer, it was carved on an escutcheon of stone, and coloured. I had gathered many particulars of the family also from conversation with Don Juan, and from the family legend lent me by Don Luis. From all that I could learn, it would appear that the lapse of nearly three centuries and a half has made but little change in the condition of the Pinzons. From generation to generation they have retained the same fair standing and reputable name throughout the neighbourhood, filling offices of public trust and dignity, and possessing great influence over their fellow-citizens by their good sense and good conduct. How rare is it to see such an instance of stability of fortune in this fluctuating world, and how truly honourable is this hereditary respectability, which has been secured by no titles or entails, but perpetuated merely by the innate worth of the race! I declare to you that the most illustrious descents of mere titled rank could never command the sincere respect and cordial regard with which I contemplated this staunch and enduring family, which for three centuries and a half has stood merely upon its virtues.

As I was to set off on my return to Seville before two o'clock, I partook of a farewell repast at the house of Don Juan, between twelve and one, and then took leave of his household with sincere regret. The good old gentleman, with the courtesy, or rather the cordiality of a true Spaniard, accompanied me to the posada to see me off. I had dispensed but little money in the posada—thanks to the hospitality of

the Pinzons—yet the Spanish pride of my host and hostess seemed pleased that I had preferred their humble chamber, and the scanty bed they had provided me, to the spacious mansion of Don Juan; and when I expressed my thanks for their kindness and attention, and regaled mine host with a few choice cigars, the heart of the poor man was overcome. He seized me by both hands and gave me a parting benediction, and then ran after the calasero to enjoin him to take particular care of me during my journey.

Taking a hearty leave of my excellent friend Don Juan, who had been unremitting in his attentions to me to the last moment, I now set off on my wayfaring, gratified to the utmost with my visit, and full of kind and grateful feelings towards Moguer and its hospitable inhabitants.

MANIFESTO OF ALONZO DE OJEDA.

[The following curious formula, composed by learned divines in Spain, was first read aloud by the friars in the train of Alonzo de Ojeda as a prelude to his attack on the savages of Carthagená; and was subsequently adopted by the Spanish discoverers in general, in their invasions of the Indian countries.]

I, ALONZO DE OJEDA, servant of the high and mighty kings of Castile and Leon, civilizers of barbarous nations, their messenger and captain, notify and make known to you, in the best way I can, that God our Lord, one and eternal, created the heavens and the earth, and one man and one woman, from whom you, and we, and all the people of the earth were and are descendants, procreated, and all those who shall come after us; but the vast number of generations which have proceeded from them, in the course of more than five thousand years that have elapsed since the creation of the world, made it necessary that some of the human race should disperse in one direction and some in another, and that they should divide themselves into many kingdoms and provinces, as they could not sustain and preserve themselves in one alone. All these people were given in charge, by God our Lord, to one person, named St. Peter, who was thus made lord and superior of all the people of the earth, and head of the whole human lineage, whom all should obey, wherever they might live, and whatever might be their law, sect or belief; he gave

him also the whole world for his service and jurisdiction, and though he desired that he should establish his chair in Rome, as a place most convenient for governing the world, yet he permitted that he might establish his chair in any other part of the world, and judge and govern all the nations, Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and whatever other sect or belief might be. This person was denominated Pope, that is to say, admirable, supreme, father and guardian, because he is father and governor of all mankind. This holy father was obeyed and honoured as lord, king, and superior of the universe by those who lived in his time, and, in like manner, have been obeyed and honoured by all those who have been elected to the Pontificate, and thus it has continued unto the present day, and will continue until the end of the world.

One of these Pontiffs of whom I have spoken, as lord of the world, made a donation of these islands and continents, of the ocean, sea, and all that they contain, to the Catholic kings of Castile, who at that time were Ferdinand and Isabella of glorious memory, and to their successors, our sovereigns, according to the tenor of certain papers drawn up for the purpose, (which you may see if you desire.) Thus his majesty is king and sovereign of these islands and continents by virtue of the said donation; and as king and sovereign, certain islands, and almost all to whom this has been notified, have received his majesty, and have obeyed and served and do actually serve him. And, moreover, like good subjects, and with good-will, and without any resistance or delay, the moment they were informed of the foregoing, they obeyed all the religious men sent among them to preach and teach our Holy Faith; and these of their free and cheerful will, without any condition or reward, became Christians, and continue so to be. And his majesty received them kindly and benignantly, and ordered that they should be treated like his other subjects and vassals: you also are required and obliged to do the same. Therefore, in the best manner I can, I pray and entreat you, that you consider well what I have said, and that you take whatever time is reasonable to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you recognise the church for sovereign and superior of the universal world, and the supreme Pontiff, called Pope, in her name, and his majesty in his place, as superior and sovereign king of the islands and Terra Firma, by virtue of the said donation; and that you consent that these religious fathers declare and preach to you

the foregoing; and if you shall so do, you will do well; and will do that to which you are bounden and obliged; and his majesty, and I in his name, will receive you with all due love and charity, and will leave you, your wives and children, free from servitude, that you may freely do with these and with yourselves whatever you please, and think proper, as have done the inhabitants of the other islands. And besides this, his majesty will give you many privileges and exemptions, and grant you many favours. If you do not do this, or wickedly and intencionally delay to do so, I certify to you, that by the aid of God, I will powerfully invade and make war upon you in all parts and modes that I can, and will subdue you to the yoke and obedience of the church and of his majesty, and I will take your wives and children and make slaves of them, and sell them as such, and dispose of them as his majesty may command; and I will take your effects and will do you all the harm and injury in my power, as vassals who will not obey or receive their sovereign and who resist and oppose him. And I protest that the deaths and disasters which may in this manner be occasioned, will be the fault of yourselves and not of his majesty, nor of me, nor of these cavaliers who accompany me. And of what I here tell you and require of you, I call upon the notary here present to give me his signed testimonial.

Date Due

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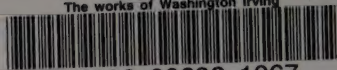
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